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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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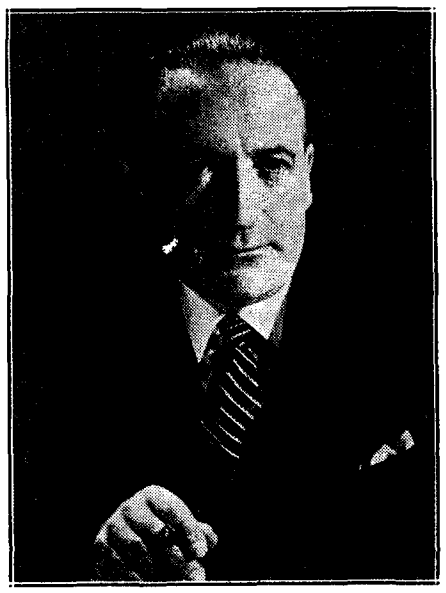

JULES ROMAINS

Life for Its Own Sake

MEN OF GOOD WILL. VOLUME III: THE PROUD AND THE MEEK. By Jules Romains. Translated from the French by Warre B. Wells. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE STEVENS

AMERICAN readers who are exposed to book reviews must by now be aware that Jules Romains is in the process of writing what many qualified critics consider a contemporary masterpiece; that this vast novel, of which the present volume is the third, and of which the end is not in sight, begins in the Paris of 1908 and is expected to cover twenty-five years; that the author has announced the intention of depicting not a group of individuals but a society; and that, whatever the significance of his intention, there is no question that his achievement is great. Certainly those who have read the first two volumes will need no recommendation of the third. As to the others, the problem of the reviewer is only to tell them what they have been missing.

As the volumes of "Men of Good Will" appear in succession, they bring to their readers an excitement in some ways comparable to that which must have been conveyed by the new instalments of a Dickens novel in its first serial publication. Here is nothing ready made and waiting for the presses; it is a complex living organism which is growing under our sight, according to a design which we discover little by little as the details develop. It is too soon, accordingly, to attempt a criticism of "Men of Good Will"; more than one critic abroad, who made this effort, had the pleasure of eating his words with the appearance of further volumes of the novel.

As the author promised at the end of the second volume, "Passion's Pilgrims," the presentation changes: the characters are now followed for longer intervals without interruption; the episodes develop at greater length, and more consecutively. Thus the bulk of the new volume is occupied by three stories, all of them concerning characters previously introduced. The dichotomy of Proud and Meek is borrowed by the author from the Abbé Jeanne, who makes his first appearance in this volume:

> On either side of a line uncertainly drawn the crowd of men and women tended to form into two flocks, into two species. On the one side were the Humble and Meek; on the other, those who were Proud in the imagination of their

(*Continued on page* 222)

The Literature of Horror

The First of a Series of Articles Interpreting Contemporary Novels in the Light of Psychoanalysis

BY LAWRENCE S. KUBIE, M. D.

Introductory Essay

By HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THIS is an introduction to three essays, the first of which is printed in this issue.

Those who have read even moderately in contemporary fiction, whether it be American, English, or European, must have been puzzled by its frequent obsessions with disease, defeat, suffering, frustration, the erotic, cruelty and brutality, and mental ill health in general. I say puzzled, although they may also have been shocked or outraged, because every period is shocked by its new literature, and there have always been bad books to outrage the cultivated intelligence. This constant neuroticism in current fiction cannot, however, be dismissed by saying that it is good or bad; it is a fact with which we have to reckon; the books which display it are some of them vulgar to the point of disgust or indecent to obscenity, and some of them as serious and as well-intentioned as "Pilgrim's Progress" or Pope's "Essay on Man." And, moral, amoral, and immoral, they are being read by thousands all over the Western world. It is clear that before we attempt to judge this literature of what the authors feel to be a neurotic age, we must understand these books better than do the puzzled readers who, if they are conservative, damn them for their unblushing frankness, and if they are radical, praise them for their supposed release from Victorian inhibitions.

That earlier literatures dealt with what the psychologists call a neurosis is of course obvious. Greek tragedy, whatever else it was and did, certainly had as one of its major themes the upsetting of mental health by the struggles between desire and inhibitions or by the consequences of an abnormal childhood. But the Greeks made these conflicts and disasters magnificent because the protagonists, whatever their maladjustments, were magnificent, extraordinarily different from the killers, the paranoiacs, the sadists, the drunkards, the mania ridden fanatics, the frightened and boastful neurotics of, let us say, Hemingway and Faulkner. It was not the neurosis but the victim of the neurosis that held the center of the stage. Unquestionably, the attempt to shift the blame to external, malevolent influence detracted from realism. But in the characters chosen by our modern writers of fiction there is a defeatism, a passionate debasement, a ruthless realism of behavior, that has few parallels in earlier times. That there are important revelations as to character, motives, and the sources of emotional life, is also not to be denied. Yet the writers of these novels seem to present case histories, about which they usually (Lawrence is an exception) have no convictions except that they are true to fact, and may be significant.

Critics, and I among them, have been acutely aware of the puzzling nature of this literature of neuroticism,* and have offered many explanations, all of which may have their share of truth. And it is certain that we must judge this literature. Since it is prevalent and has its roots in the psychology of our times, we must for our minds' health as much as for the sake of culture, determine its relation to morals and its value for art. We must learn not only whether it is good for us and when, but whether it is good in itself, and particularly when and why and how. We must have some criterion by which we can distinguish mere vulgarities escaping control from the expression of modern minds seeking release, and detect the difference between malign exhibitionism and the efforts of the imagination to uncover areas of the human spirit hitherto in darkness or obscurity.

If instincts largely evaded in the literature of the nineteenth century are becoming the chief subjects of fiction and drama, we must have some means of deciding how far all this represents an inevitable and necessary readjustment of our estimates of man. Granting the vividness of a Hemingway, the poignancy of a Faulkner, the intuitions of a Caldwell, the crusading fervor of a Lawrence, are we getting merely troubled and passionate outcries from agonized spirits not yet attained to self-knowledge or even to a philosophy of acceptance, resistance, or despair, or a new literature with a new and true content?

Now it must be clear even to the most hasty reviewers of the erotic, neurotic books which come daily to their desks, that before judgment begins there are some aspects of this literature that need explaining. For in all these books, but especially in the best, there are obvious reflections of mental states not clear to the reader, nor clear to the author. As with the stories of Poe, or "Moby Dick," or "The Ancient Mariner," no critic can speak with absolute confidence until some bedside physician has given him, when available, the history of the patient. This history is not the most significant factor. That the Oedipus complex may exist in Greek tragedy is not the most important, may be the least important, element in the judging of that tragedy, but until we understand the life behind the phantasy our

(*Continued on next page*)

* See an essay called "The School of Cruelty" in *The Saturday Reiew* of March 21, 1931.

Two Poems

By SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

INTERIORS

AS the candle-light and the fire-light
Weave patterns on the rafters overhead,
And on the couples advancing
In light and shadow, all in shadows some,
The little crooked fiddler, apple-red
Smiles at the prospect of long drinks to come.

HILLSIDE COTTAGES

My blessing on that child of mirth,
Blessing on her who blest my sight,
That laughing cottage girl with eyes
Brimmed up of wildered mountain light,
And feet that seemed to bless the earth,
And hands like poising butterflies.

WILLIAM SAROYAN

A Daring Young Man

THE DARING YOUNG MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE AND OTHER STORIES. By William Saroyan. New York: Random House. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

> All this rambling may seem pointless and a waste of time, but it is not. There is absolutely no haste—I can walk the hundred yard dash in a full day—and anyone who prefers may toss this story aside and take up something in the *Cosmopolitan*. I am not asking anyone to stand by. I am not promising golden apples to all who are patient. I am sitting in my room, living my life, tapping my typewriter.

SO speaks young Mr. Saroyan, himself, upon the earth, an Armenian of twenty-six years of age, who was born in the Fresno vineyard district of California, whose father was a writer and teacher, who comes of a line of tellers of tales, who first electrified the editors of *Story* by sending in a study of a destitute young writer called "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze," and then deluged them with stories thereafter in every mail. Mr. Saroyan does ramble in his tale-telling, but he has the ability usually to make his rambling interesting and not boring. He is intensely conscious of himself, but it is a self of some subtlety. Writers for the magazines could give him many pointers on construction,

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This Week

THE VALLEYS OF THE ASSASSINS
By FREYA STARK
Reviewed by Frederick G. Clapp

MENDELSSOHN: A SECOND ELIJAH
By SCHIMA KAUFMAN
Reviewed by Carl Engel

WHEN THE LOOMS ARE SILENT
By MAXENCE VAN DER MEERSCH
Reviewed by Robert Cantwell

CITY EDITOR
By STANLEY WALKER
Reviewed by Charles McD. Puckette

THE FOOLSCAP ROSE
By JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER
Reviewed by Theodore Purdy, Jr.

CULEBRA
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Next Week or Later

WHAT THE PROLETARIAT READS
By LOUIS ADAMIC

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The Literature of Horror

(*Continued from preceding page*)

judgments are unsure. So and much more so with these current stories where neurotic states reveal themselves confusedly on every page.

This history is available now at least for much of the neurotic literature under discussion; if not for the authors, certainly for the books. They are written obviously about precisely the kind of people and kind of problems that for a generation have been the concern of scientific investigators in psychology, and particularly in psychiatry and the half science, half art of psycho-analysis. That there is a wide divergence in interpretation and in methods among these scientists is irrelevant except as leaving the right to differ from a particular conclusion. For these books deal not with rare but with common disorders, as to whose nature there is now general agreement among specialists in nervous complaints. And whether the Freudian emphasis upon sex as a dominant in all mental maladjustments is right or wrong, it is certain that in these books the authors have concentrated upon the problems of sex and so asked for sexual interpretations. The youth with a psychological maladjustment sits in every psychiatrist's office; the novel about an obviously psychological maladjustment is on every serious reader's table. It is not the psychiatrist's business to say whether the book is good or bad art, it is not his business to judge of its value to normal humanity, but emphatically we must go to him to ask what light he can throw upon the case history there exposed in confusing phantasy, upon the sex obsessions obscurely and often crudely described, upon the unprecedented alternations of beauty and vileness, so obviously pathological, which make these books unique in literature.

Hence *The Saturday Review* believes that the articles which follow are of the greatest importance. An attempt to do something of this kind has been made several times before, but always by amateurs, or by scientists who confused literary with scientific judgments. Such attempted and usually futile criticism has aroused little respect. It seems necessary, therefore, to carry out a psychological analysis of specific books under competent control and with scientific detachment. These essays are not literary criticism. But even though delicate, difficult, and in some of their conclusions presumably controversial, they are the indispensable preliminaries of a literary criticism of neurotic literature.

The results are not always or often pleasant, and those who dislike to know too much about what they are reading are advised to go no further. But logically they should then give up neurotic literature good and bad. To the wiser, who will understand that without neuroticism there would have been no "Hamlet," no "Ode to the Nightingale," no "Troilus and Cressida," these probings into the phantasies out of which this current and still highly experimental and unjudged literature is made, will be intensely interesting. It is our own time speaking, whether we like it or not. And such probings had to be made. No reputable literary journal can publish a review of this literature of neuroticism which does not take into account the available explanations of the ultimate sources of its phantasies, without inviting a charge of superficiality.

The particular books in which the editors have been interested, are not necessarily the best of their kind, but certainly among the most widely read. Faulkner's "Sanctuary" has already been translated and discussed abroad as well as much read here. The stories of Hemingway have been read and imitated in every Western country, and Caldwell's "God's Little Acre" was recently the cause of a lawsuit in which the court refused to suppress the novel. They have asked Dr. Lawrence S. Kubie, a highly trained psychiatrist, experienced in psychoanalysis, to dissect these books in order to discover, if possible, the nature of the phantasies there contained. After the *Review* has published Dr. Kubie's studies it will be possible to pass on from these explanatory remarks to a more specific and discriminating attempt to pass judgment upon the new literature of neuroticism.

William Faulkner's "Sanctuary"

An Analysis by LAWRENCE S. KUBIE, M.D.

ANYONE familiar with the phantasies of the insane is continually encountering incidents in daily life which remind him hauntingly of the hospital. Such experiences are at first disturbing. Ultimately, however, they become reassuring; because they prove that there is nothing in the phantastic world of the insane which is completely alien to ordinary human nature, and that insanity and normality merge into each other by imperceptible gradations. The psychiatrist who is also a psychoanalyst is in hourly contact with this borderline between sickness and health, and finds himself therefore in a special position. Frequently in observing the successive stages in the transition from sickness to health, or occasionally from health to sickness, he has an opportunity to study strange patterns of phantasy, perplexing symbolic distortions, and surprising shifts of feeling which are hidden from the casual onlooker. All products of the human spirit become to him objects of study without prejudice, so that he brings to literature a clinical eye, seeking in its pages masked expressions of hope and desire, of frustration, anxiety, and anger, similar to those which appear in his patients.

From the jacket design of "Sanctuary" (Modern Library)

For this search modern literature offers a fertile field. Because it attempts to portray that which is neurotic and defeated in human nature, it is closer to truth than the old romantic tradition which was content to picture only the aspirations of man. And because it seeks for the causes of these defeats within man's inner nature, it is sounder than that "realism" which explains all distress by the workings of chance and external events. Despite its honesty, however, one finds that there is much in this modern literature that is as confused as the neurosis itself. This literature sometimes repeats itself compulsively, just as the neurosis indulges in endless and compulsive repetitions, Sometimes it is exhibitionistic; and even though the exhibitionism of literature is subjected to the discipline of an artistic technique, it reminds one that the neurosis too is exhibitionistic. Therefore even where the portrayal of problems is accurate, the pseudo-solution which is offered may be confusing and neurotic. This makes it worth while to try to penetrate below the surface of some of these modern writings, if only because of the confusion which their very power can create in the minds of readers. Is it not a fair challenge to art to demand that when it deals with the neurotic components of human nature it should understand its subject?

Of the authors of these books the psychoanalytic critic of literature knows nothing because he has no access to direct information about their lives. He does not even know to what extent they have been conscious or unconscious of the meaning of what they have written. He does not know whether their own lives share in the problems which their books reflect. It would be an impossible and an intolerable presumption for him to draw any conclusion about them as individuals. Nonetheless he is free to discuss the unconscious meaning of the books in which these men have written of matters of which they show, at least, only a dim comprehension. Of these books William Faulkner's "Sanctuary" is a brilliant and most interesting example, and I shall choose it for the first of my studies.

So familiar are tales of horror in literature that we accept them without realizing how strange a phenomenon they are, or how difficult to explain. Furthermore, in recent years changes have appeared in the literature of horror, comparable in many ways to those which have occurred in the literature of sex. In a general way it may be said that in both categories there has been a gradual drift from a romantic point of view, first to one of ridicule, and then to a frantic and tortured striving after realism.

Some readers resent this horror literature intensely; some exult in it; and still others find in it merely a thrilling exercise in literary craftsmanship. About its artistic significance there is, therefore, much disagreement. It would seem impossible to resolve this disagreement without first understanding in some measure its psychological origins.

This literature is so abundant that to study it in detail would involve the psychoanalytic dissection of a great many books and stories, drawn from many stages of the world's cultural evolution. Within the limits of this study that is impossible; and so one turns instead to a single book which brings together all the converging streams which have contributed to the development of the current trend. Such a book is William Faulkner's "Sanctuary." It is not the only book, nor even the best one necessarily. But it serves our purpose both because of the turbulent power of its imagery, the violent eruption of unconscious forces, and also for the practical reason that it has been widely read.

As a further justification for concentrating on one book, one may point to the analogy to what may occur in the psychoanalytic treatment of a patient. There it happens not infrequently that a series of dreams appears, scattered perhaps over many weeks or months, the first ones of which are benign and relatively unemotional, the successive dreams becoming increasingly distressing. The translation of the earlier dreams into terms of fundamental instinctual drives and conflicts is rarely possible on the basis of any material which the patient can produce. As the work goes on, however, even if one ventures upon no specific interpretations of the dreams, the significance of the series becomes clearer. More violent feelings are aroused; the imagery becomes more turbulent; instinctual drives come steadily closer to direct expression. The dream series may be thought of as "ripening"; and gradually the evolution reaches a point at which a dream comes to the surface which can be analyzed fruitfully, throwing light retrospectively upon the mysterious shadows of all its predecessors.

In the history of the literature of horror it is possible to recognize stages which are roughly similar to this. From a boy's tales of adventure, with their naive, exultant triumphs over external dangers, to the deep and biological horrors of "Sanctuary" a series could be traced. In this series it would become evident that this constant preoccupation with fear and horror has a direct bodily meaning. The more naive and childlike presentations are all externalized adventure stories with dangerous situations. The more "realistic," adult, and "morbid" stories penetrate below this surface into the instinctual reservoirs out of which terror arises. There is a direct link between the frequent nightmares of childhood and the rarer but equally significant nightmares of adults, and an identical relation between the naive melodrama of a simple frontier civilization and the sophisticated shocker of a "morbid" modern community.

The problem which faces us reaches to the roots of certain complex issues. In the first place it raises the question of the genesis of anxiety; and in the second place the even more perplexing issue of the paradoxical pleasurable utilization of horror (what is technically known as the "erotization of anxiety"). Indeed it is this paradoxical and perverted utilization of anxiety for "pleasure" purposes, rather than the problem of the genesis of anxiety, which constitutes our immediate concern.

The outstanding feature of this ultra-sophisticated literature of biological horror is its increasingly frank reference to some form of genital injury. It is not necessary for this reason to assume that all anxiety is genital in its derivation. It is enough to recognize that there is an important interplay of all phantasies of mutilation and contamination between one instinctual battlefield and another; but that since in normal life the genital normally assumes a position of dominance among the instincts, all manifestations of anxiety tend to become focussed in this direction. Whatever the source, however, the outcome is that through all of the books in which horror plays so large a role, the ultimate manifestation of the major horror is through some form of genital injury.

One might expect to find that a great deal of this literature had been written by women, because so frequently in these tales the victims are women, and since in real life the chief form of genital injury of which both sexes are *consciously* fearful is always the fear of rape, and especially of the forcible defloration of a virgin. Surprisingly enough, however, one finds that it is not women who write of defloration and its terrors, but men. Since the state of terror, whatever its apparent nature may be, must have a personal core to start with, this suggests that there must be a basic fear in all men which merely uses the idea of rape as a less distressing substitute. Therefore one examines the men in these tales of rape for evidence of the nature of this basic fear and finds that they tend to an extraordinary degree to be figures who are crippled either in a directly genital sense, or indirectly through some other form of bodily injury. This crippling produces a state of real or psychic impotence.

It is out of just this sense of impotence that there arises one of the most characteristic nightmares of childhood, one in which the child feels helpless in the presence of danger and either runs frantically hither and thither and never escapes, or else is unable to move at all (*cf.* Temple Drake, in "Sanctuary"). Besides that one may place the not infrequent obsessive phantasy of an adult who finds himself bound helplessly while bandits attack the woman he loves. In such a phantasy the bandits execute for the man that which his own fear of impotence makes impossible; but he is freed from the painful acknowledgment of his fear of impotence by making it appear to be the result of external interference and external agents (that is, the bandits who tie him up) rather than the result of his own internal incapacity. (This, as we shall see, takes place either in fearful anticipation or as a reality not once but repeatedly in "Sanctuary.")

It is for this reason, primarily, that we take it to be no accident that the chief villain in the tale of "Sanctuary" is described as totally impotent. This was not a device chosen by chance out of many alternatives, merely to intensify the horror. It was an inevitable choice; because the whole significance of such horror phantasies is linked to the male's constant subterranean struggle with fears of impotence. We shall see, after the main features of the story have been outlined, how almost every element in it represents one of the many ways in which the male deals with this fear.

It should be clearly stated and clearly understood that we are implying nothing about the psychosexual life of the author of this book. Anxieties about potency exist in masked forms in every living male. But the ability to write such a book gives no indication that such fears have acquired any special or unusual intensity in the personal life of the book's creator. The artist's intuitive perceptions and representations of problems may at times de-

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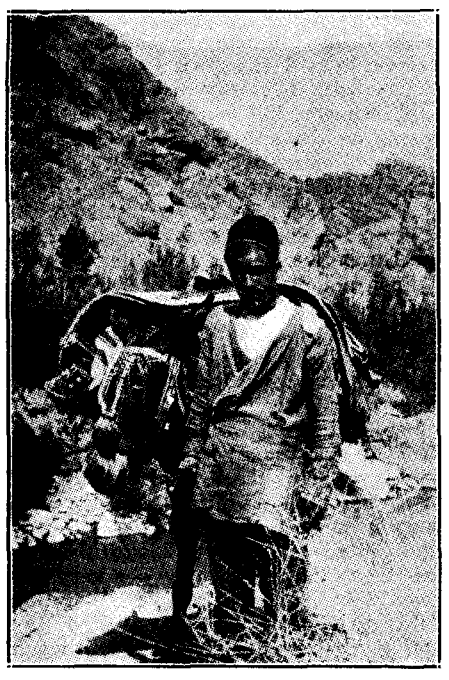
On the Plateaus of Ancient Iran

THE VALLEYS OF THE ASSASSINS. By Freya Stark. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1934. $4.

Reviewed by FREDERICK G. CLAPP

TEHERAN is accorded few new books in the English language. But, one day in a small bookshop, appeared a few copies of "The Valleys of the Assassins." As its title piqued interest in the realm of the fanatical secret order that spread terror through western Asia during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, all the copies were speedily sold, and the English-speaking residents of Teheran thereupon commenced borrowing copies from one another so that all might read. The book, with its description of explorations in the wilds of Persia by a young English woman, proved a refreshing addition to the numerous volumes in the old style that had appeared in recent years on various parts of the East.

The reader who knows Persia, opening to the Table of Contents, may be aware of a sense of disappointment; for at a casual glance Miss Stark's work appears to be a collection of accounts of several journeys of which only one chapter bears upon The Assassins' Valley. But we read and are enthralled. This proves to be the sort of book for which lovers of Persia have longed—a volume that takes us back into a little frequented valley in the massive Elburz Range and gives such a graphic account of wanderings and day to day events as to render the hardened Persian traveller jealous of the experiences and to cause the lay reader to long for a journey to the mountainous plateaus of ancient Iran. The picture of country wanderings, companions of the road, and the inside story of mountain villages and their inhabitants are all true to life. Miss Stark, a young woman who had read the "Arabian Nights," who had labored studiously through "labyrinths of Arabic . . . for fun," and who adhered to a belief that "it is an excellent reason for doing things merely because one likes the doing of them," started one day on a "Treasure Hunt." She found no material riches, but a wealth of excitement amidst darkest Persia (now fast becoming light under the



THE AUTHOR'S GUIDE FROM THE ASSASSINS' VALLEY

wise rule of Reza Pahlevi—perhaps Persia's greatest Shah).

No one who opens Miss Stark's book will stop at the end of the chapter that bears its name, but will be drawn on to read "The Assassins' Castle of Lamiasar," the Rock of Alamut, and thence to follow the author to Takht-i-Suleiman (the "Throne of Solomon")—a forbidding unclimbed mountain "glistening in the solitude of its snows at the head of an unmapped valley." Miss Stark, like other travellers, had found the "noise, dust, and mosquitoes" of a certain city hotel almost unbearable, and she welcomed the arrival of her disreputable guide in order to start for the Assassins' valley. Like other eastern travellers she tells us that "in spite of myriads of mosquitoes I slept peacefully that night"; but adds that, in accordance with a local custom, she was not allowed to sleep in her tent on a clean country hill (the leading villagers saw to that) but was escorted to a far less attractive *chaikhaneh* (tea-house) inside the limits of mud-walls. A victim of climatic illness, she spent days in crude villages. But she seems to have been genuinely fond of the unsophisticated natives and their primitive ways, and recuperated among them so that she was able to continue on her way and almost, though not quite, attain the crest of Tahkt-i-Suleiman. The snows, precipices, and poor maps baffled her as they have baffled more experienced mountaineers.

Miss Stark was not an idle loiterer along the trail; she took compass and barometric observations and gives us geographical maps that actually correct those that have been previously published, together with enough historical references to assist the reader somewhat in understanding the region. Every traveller to the part of the Elburz Range which she describes will henceforth need her volume.

The wisdom of a "Treasure Hunt" in the Luristan mountains may be questioned. Nobody goes to Luristan. Yet Miss Stark did so and was in general hospitably received by the people, although sometimes asked by the police, "Why are you off the road?", a question, she admits, which "has never been solved . . . for the authorities looked with suspicion and disfavor" on her entire escapade.

Stories of the picturesque women and rough tribesmen of the Luristan region furnish a theme absorbing to the reader and give by far the best primitive picture that has come out of that section of now progressive Persia. Even as to Luristan the author proves herself a geographer and supplies good maps. She may have had narrow escapes from the law as well as from the lawless; yet she achieved her ambition and advanced the cause of geography at the same time.

❧ ❧

Frederick G. Clapp, who is a consulting geologist, was at one time petroleum adviser to the Imperial Government of Persia.

Confession of Faith

STAGES ON THE ROAD. By Sigrid Undset. Translated by Arthur G. Chater. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1934. $2.75.

Reviewed by THEODORE MAYNARD

THESE essays were originally written for Catholic periodicals in Norway and Sweden. Fröken Undset writes of Ramón Lull of Palma, the mystic theologian; St. Angela Merici, the foundress of the Ursulines; and on two of the English martyrs, Robert Southwell and Margaret Clitherow, whose fresh sportsmanlike spirit she notes, as we may note with pleasure that much of her piety is nourished from English sources. The concluding essay is a "Reply to a Parish Priest" in which she gives an account of her spiritual development. An agnostic in her school days, unable to affirm even disbelief, she came into the Catholic Church through perceiving that a stable moral system is impossible with the premise of revealed religion. Fidelity between man and woman simply cannot be, she says bluntly, apart from an ideal which demands fidelity. "But true to a man—no, I don't believe any woman can be that." Therefore, she concludes: "We have no right to assume that any part of European tradition, cultural values, moral ideas, emotional wealth, which has its origin in the dogmatically defined Christianity of the Catholic Church, will continue to live a 'natural' life if the people of Europe reject Christianity and refuse to accept God's supernatural grace."

Many of the legends of the saints she admits arose for much the same reason that today people make up legends about film stars. And on heresy her pithy epigram is: "It is not doubt which makes a man a heretic, but belief." From such pungencies "Stages on the Road" derives its refreshingly tart flavor, as its charm flows from Sigrid Undset's gallant spirit and poetic feeling.

A Pedestal for Mendelssohn

MENDELSSOHN: "A Second Elijah." By Schima Kaufman. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1934. $3.50.

Reviewed by CARL ENGEL

ALTHOUGH books on music and musicians by American authors are increasing in number at a gratifying rate, they are still not so abundant that any new contribution in this field can be dismissed in silence as unnecessary. And yet, at the first glance, it would seem to be a question at least open to debate whether our troubled world, at this moment, had been standing in dire need of one more "full-length" portrait of Felix Mendelssohn. Be that as it may, Mr. Schima Kaufman, of Philadelphia,—a member of the Second Violin section in that city's superb orchestra—answered the question for himself in the affirmative, whereupon he bravely decided to fill the supposed need.

MENDELSSOHN PLAYING TO QUEEN VICTORIA AND PRINCE ALBERT

Zeal and determination are laudable qualities. They have enabled Mr. Kaufman to write a book on Mendelssohn of more than three hundred large pages. The "full-length" is attained by somewhat Procrustean methods. It cannot be said that the book adds greatly to the stature of the man or the musician. The man of sensitive soul and noble, if a shade priggish, character has long ago been justly appraised; his music, not always so. It has undergone frequent and sharp fluctuations. Perhaps because, after all, much of it does not come up to par. Much of it "aimed to please." And art that is primarily actuated by such motives, is apt sooner rather than later to incur displeasure. All of which cannot alter the fact that the seventeen-year-old boy's music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" remains one of the astonishing feats in composition, and that rational musicians will probably continue for some time to count the "Hebrides" and "Meeresstille" overtures among the masterpieces.

Mr. Kaufman, in his preface, disclaims having written "a case book on racial prejudice." Nevertheless, he has clearly approached his task from the Jewish angle. While it is impossible to disregard Mendelssohn's Hebrew ancestry and background or to overlook certain handicaps that they imposed upon him—not at all socially, but temperamentally—, he can not be considered as primarily a "Jewish" composer. He would have been the last to welcome such qualification. Nor would he have cared for the swinging of the thurible by well-meaning zealots in his fathers' creed. Especially not if it is done at the expense of brother composers. It must be admitted that Mr. Kaufman's juxtaposition of Mendelssohn's music with "the absurdities of Pfitzner and Roselius" (why bring up Roselius?) is rather gratuitous. It does not advance his case, if he must have one. There is no foundation in fact for his statement that late events in Germany have "caused the rest of the world to revalue" Mendelssohn's genius —along with the currencies of the world?

The illicit commerce between biography and romance is of long standing and has become tacitly accepted. Some recent children of this union—as for instance Mrs. Davenport's "Mozart" and one or two of Count de Pourtalès's passionate tales—have been legitimatized. The bar sinister did not bar them from the company of the elect. A man's morals are one thing; his talents, another. The same applies to books. The test is taste. And if the old Latin saw is correct, that taste is not a matter for dispute, we must at least concede that good taste is above contention. Mr. Kaufman would have us know that, before writing his book, he engaged in his "own private researches over a period of several years." That is highly commendable. We fail to see, however, why as a consequence of these researches he should feel justified in having "reconstructed too romantically" the life story of a musical romanticist. The result, plainly, is a romance, not a biography. We have no quarrel with Mr. Kaufman on the score that "insight and discovery are the instruments of the sincere biographer." Indeed, second sight is the biographer's torch. But between illumination and conflagration there is a subtle difference.

Occasionally Mr. Kaufman's romancing can be graphic and felicitous. And again he can treat the reader to a style of which the following is a fair sample:

> Save for the rise and fall of a sleeping person's breathing, delicate as tiny wing-beats, that came to him from across the hall, the house was deathly quiet, reverberating to its own silence. Like the amorted siren of a steamer slipping out with the early tide, a distant watchman's whistle echoed faintly in the remoteness. . . . Mendelssohn wearily looked at his table, with manuscripts, quills, and pencils neatly stacked. A heavy torpor seized him, weighing him down. He threw himself onto the bed to fall into that deathlike sleep from which he had to be roused by force.

This is the sort of prose that lulls the weary reader into heavy torpor and, after a while, sends him off to deathlike sleep.

This book is of the kind one goes through with uneasy delight; charmed every now and then by its more ingratiating qualities, and constantly made wary by its obvious inaccuracies. Within the first dozen pages the author confounds one of Berlin's several "canals" with the river Spree. On the last page of his biography he mistakes the "Herrenhaus," the upper chamber of the Prussian Diet, for a part "of the newly-created Reichstag." These may be trifling errors. But posted, as they are, at the beginning and at the end, they are unfortunately indicative of much that lies between them.

Mendelssohn's "Place in Music" is dealt with in a fraction more than eight pages trailing aft. They can hardly be said to "revalue his genius." Nor is it always evident where the author speaks his own mind and where he relies on the opinion of others. When Mr. Kaufman invokes as "an authority" one H. H. Statham, an English architect with a Victorian turn of mind and the proclivities of a music critic, unremembered by musical encyclopedias, uneasiness borders on alarm. Is it possible that Mr. Kaufman took his task both too seriously and too lightly? His "biography" may form entertaining reading for the layman; it is not a work to which the student can turn for invariably reliable information.

We have probably made it clear that going through Mr. Kaufman's book has not been, to us, a matter of unalloyed satisfaction. We record our disappointment regretfully, but not despairingly. On the contrary, we are of the belief that some day Mr. Kaufman will turn out a first class job.

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The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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Murder and Bad Reading

The reading men do lives after them, their acts are oft interred with their bones. The ultimate cause of the murder of King Alexander was his refusal to accept the idea of a Federal State. His education (which was Imperial Russian) was against it; his family experience made it repugnant to his imagination. A Serb descended from the oppressed Slavs who fought like bandits against a cruel alien domination, his instincts were all against equality of privilege. He knew only two methods of government, to oppress, or be oppressed. Like the rest of continental Europe, Switzerland and perhaps Rhenish Germany excepted, he thought only in terms of hegemony.

His country was difficult, a rummage shop of remnants collected over centuries from the disintegrating Turkish empire. Three peoples, three religions, though fortunately only one language, and among them only one nation, Serbia, with experience in self-government, though that experience a bloody and turbulent one. It was the old story of hang together or hang separately. The Slovenes are Catholic peasants; the Croats, ex-Austrians, are also Catholic and have affiliations with Western culture which make them regard their Serbian partners as a century closer to barbarism than themselves; the Serbs are Greek orthodox, splendid fighters, but still uneasy in Western civilization; the southern Slavs, many of them still Moslem, and the Montenegrins, are mountaineers more adept with the rifle than with other gifts of the age of machines. The difficulty of uniting such a patchwork of centuries and cultures is obvious.

The rights of man do not exist except where there is common consent that there should be rights, and this common consent is impossible unless the imagination has been conditioned to see man as an individual who deserves consideration, whether inlander or outlander, because he is man. However imperfectly, with whatever inconsistence, those nations into whose minds the persuasive arguments of Rousseau have deeply entered, coloring all their literature, or where through centuries of a peculiar experience the rights of the individual have been buttressed and fortified, such nations have solved more than once the European problem so burningly present in the Balkans by the idea of the Federal State. With all its subsequent inconveniences, this idea certainly made possible the United States of America, and, with modifications, the British Empire. It is implicit in the French system, though no equivalent problem arose in homogeneous modern France. Competent observers believe that it was, and perhaps is, the only hope for Jugo-Slavia, and probably for the whole Danubian region that has so many analogies with our Mississippi Valley which if Napoleon had not been pressed for money and unsuccessful in the West Indies might have become another Balkans.

What stands in the way is the unhappy past history of the Balkans, yet even more an imagination incapable of seeing as desirable a solution where diverse states join without sacrificing their individuality. It was, if you please, the wrong reading which brought Alexander to his almost inevitable ending, if by reading one means, as one should, the fabric of ideas and imagination which make the mental environment of a man. Czars, in this respect, were ill read, the managers of the Soviet, in spite of the tyrannical means they have used to bring about unity, are far better read, for culturally, if not politically, Russia is a Federal State. And one might add, in fairness, that the United States is a Federal State politically, but not economically, which may indicate lacks or lapses not yet made up in our own reading, since it is clear that if the principle is sound it must go beyond the political order to the sustenance and welfare of economic man. Only Ireland among English-speaking countries seems to stick in the crop of this theory of politics by reading, since the obvious solution for Irish unity would seem to be a Federal State, but here again, as in the Balkans, history, and particularly religious history, has been too much for common sense. And yet even in Ireland the solution of equal rights in a central government, which Alexander rejected to his cost, ended a civil war and put a stop to outrage, violence, and cruelty.

"YOU SEE, MY LADY, I'M JUST HALF WAY THROUGH A BOOK ON NUDISM."

Letters to the Editor: *Sir Edmund Gosse and The "Reading Edition"*

The Brownings and Gosse

SIR:—The statement has been made in the controversy concerning the forged "Reading Edition" of the "Sonnets from the Portuguese" that if we could identify the "friend" to whom "Mr. Browning, eight years before his death, made a statement with the understanding that at some future date, after his own death, the story might be more widely told," we should know the forger. This is rather a wild assumption that the glib forger invented an idyllic episode in the life of the Brownings and foisted it upon Edmund Gosse, who might well have queried how the forger could have known at that time such intimate details of the Browning menage as to invent a story so psychologically true. None of Elizabeth Browning's intimate letters were published until after Gosse made the above statement in 1894 in the preface to an edition of "Sonnets from the Portuguese," repeating it in his "Critical Kit-Kats" in 1896.

It will be a relief to all lovers of the Brownings and students of their works to know they may continue to believe that idyllic episode really happened as Gosse related it—unless they are very skeptical indeed! Here is his account of the incident:

> Their custom was, Mr. Browning said, to write alone, and not to show to each other what they had written. This was a rule which he sometimes broke through, but she never. He had a habit of working in a downstairs room, where their meals were spread, while Mrs. Browning studied in a room on the floor above. One day, early in 1847, their breakfast being over, Mrs. Browning went upstairs while her husband stood at the window watching the street till the table should be cleared. He was presently aware of some one behind him, although the servant was gone. It was Mrs. Browning, who held him by the shoulder to prevent his turning to look at her, and at the same time pushed a packet of papers into the pocket of his coat. She told him to read that, and to tear it up if he did not like it; and then she fled again to her own room.
>
> Mr. Browning seated himself at the table and unfolded the parcel. It contained the series of sonnets which have now become so illustrious. As he read, his emotion and delight can be conceived. Before he had finished it was impossible for him to restrain himself, and, regardless of his promise, he rushed upstairs and stormed that guarded citadel. He was early conscious that these were treasures not to be kept from the world: "I dared not reserve to myself," he said, "the finest sonnets written in any language since Shakespeare."

I have just had the pleasure of forwarding to Mr. John Carter a copy of a letter written by Sir Edmund Gosse on April 12th, 1927. This letter was loaned to me by Dr. A. J. Armstrong from his remarkable collection of Browningiana at Baylor University, Waco, Texas. A Mr. J. R. Burton had evidently written to Sir Edmund after reading Lilian Whiting's "The Brownings," and discovering there the letter written by Robert Browning in 1881—the date is important as being "eight years before his death"—in which he asserts that he first saw the Sonnets in 1849 at Bagni di Lucca. Either Mr. Burton emphasized the fact that the poet's son made the statement also when he forwarded the letter to Miss Whiting, or Gosse carelessly or deliberately in his answer ignores the fact that the statement was made by the poet himself.

Sir Edmund says:

> Mr. Robert Browning told me (I think in the year 1887) the story regarding the authorship of those poems which I have told in my "Critical Kit-Kats" and elsewhere. Of the version said to be given by Robert B. Browning, the poet's son, I have only this to remark,—that young Browning was not born when his mother gave the packet of sonnets to his father, and that his statement, if he made it, cannot have the same authority as that seriously and explicitly made to me by Mr. Browning himself, when he knew I was taking notes of his speech. The only correction of my account which I can make is that perhaps the conversation was later than "eight years before" Mr. Browning's death, because I was in close relations with him from 1876 until 1889, and I cannot give the date of those particular statements.

Of course we know now that Robert Barrett Browning was born a few months before the letters were shown in 1849, two years later than the date accepted by Gosse. So we naturally hark back to see how he may have come to accept that date in all honesty of conviction. If Robert Browning had told the story of the presentation to Gosse, asking him to make it known to the world, when Gosse sat down to write the story in 1894 he had in his possession a copy of the forged Reading Edition in all probability, and had accepted the story that the manuscript had been sent to Miss Mitford for private printing. Mr. Wise in his 1929 Catalogue names Gosse as having bought a copy which he afterward sold to Charles Foote of New York. A very busy man makes mistakes and knows that he makes them. Suppose he started to write "Lucca" from memory, and then realized that the date when he believed the manuscript was sent to Miss Mitford was 1847. He might so easily say to himself, "But they were at Pisa then. Browning must have said Pisa." Having decided that was right, it seemed right for the rest of his life. That book was before him with the date, 1847, and so he fitted what Browning said about the publication in 1850 to that, as he believed, first printing. He naturally could not know before the love letters with their intimate revelations were printed in 1898, that Mrs. Browning's intimacy with Miss Mitford was never a soul intimacy, but merely pleasant commerce on the subject of books, people, events. "Personally she and I are strangers," wrote Miss Barrett, and later, from Italy: "I love Miss Mitford though she understands me no more than you in England understand Louis Napoleon or the French nation."

It is a psychological probability that Robert Browning did tell the story of the presentation to Gosse when they were working over the Beddoes manuscripts or at some other time. It bears the mark of authenticity as being entirely true to their lives and characters. She was always in his mind to the end of his life, and when he destroyed most of his own writings, he seemed to have kept everything she wrote, lest something beautiful should be lost to the world. This was very evident in the Sotheby sale of 1913. Browning told and dictated the story of his life up to his marriage, to Gosse in 1881; it would have been so natural, then or later, to relate to him the beautiful instance of her reticence which he had treasured for so many years. It seems to me certain that Browning lovers may continue to treasure that story, and that the poet, himself, told it with the injunction to make it known, in order that his "Lyric Love" might be revered with complete understanding in future years.

HARRIET GAYLORD.

Yonkers, N. Y.

Bruce Rogers Bibliography

SIR:—I am compiling a bibliography of the books designed by Bruce Rogers, which will be published by the Walpole Printing Office. I would greatly appreciate the receipt of items and their bibliographical descriptions, that have not appeared in Frederic Warde's bibliography, nor the Lerch extension.

IRVIN HAAS.

581 Snediker Ave.,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Saturday Review recommends

This Group of Current Books:

THE DARING YOUNG MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE. By WILLIAM SAROYAN. *Random House.* A volume of stories by a new writer of striking quality.

THE TRUMPETING CRANE. By HELENE MAGARET. *Farrar & Rinehart.* A narrative poem of the soil.

"NOT I, BUT THE WIND . . ." By FRIEDA LAWRENCE. *Viking.* A chronicle of their life together by the wife of D. H. Lawrence.

This Less Recent Book:

LAUGHING IN THE JUNGLE. By LOUIS ADAMIC. *Harpers.* The story of an immigrant in America.

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Strikebreakers

WHEN THE LOOMS ARE SILENT. By Maxence van der Meersch. Translated by Fredrick A. Blossom. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT CANTWELL

THIS is a quaint, platitudinous novel, dealing with a wretchedly disorganized strike in a French provincial town; a strike called, it seems, though the author does not say so, by ambitious madmen, maintained in spite of the active desire of the majority of the workers to return to work, and finally defeated after prolonged suffering and bloodshed—"another triumph of human stupidity," in the words of the jacket. It seems more accurately a triumph for the employers, but perhaps in this case an employer's victory means that stupidity has won again. Written without passion, containing only the most elementary characterizations, "When the Looms Are Silent" would be unreadable were it not for its unique distinction: it is the only novel dealing with industrial conflict, out of the dozen or so published in this country in the past few years, that speaks for the sincere, the convinced, the loyal scab.

These dozen or so novels revolving around strikes, and constituting the bulk of the proletarian literature that has stimulated so much critical controversy, have generally expressed the point of view of the strikers; if any of our novelists have sympathized with the scabs, they have kept silent or written of other matters. In the proletarian novels, the scab is usually presented as an abject creature, only William Rollins, in "The Shadow Before," attempting a more complex portrayal. Now, if any further evidence is needed to show that strikebreakers generally are an uninspiring lot, this uninspired tribute to them provides it. All of this author's working class characters are wretched, but in the hierarchy of depravity the strikebreakers have fewer facial blemishes and more appealing moral qualities; the active strikers range from the innocently blundering Pierre, whose crime is only that he blinds his friend of the garde mobile, to the monstrous Demasure, communist, pimp, and drunkard, who is supplied with great quantities of money from some secret source. There is no story. The strike begins without spirit, is voted reluctantly and after high-pressure salesmanship, to resist a wage deduction of five per cent for sickness insurance. There seems to be no organization, no provision for feeding the strikers, no attempt to encourage despondent individuals, no program beyond the beating of scabs. Over the beating of scabs the author grows most eloquent; he reports the gory details down to the last humiliation. Driven by extremes of hunger, the strikers turn to theft and prostitution. The well-meaning mill-owner is driven to the wall, cast out by his own trade association when he tries to settle with his workers, and is finally burnt alive when the strikers tip over a truck he is driving. The account of precisely how he burns deserves the attention of a psychiatrist.

To call "When the Looms Are Silent" a fascist novel is to give it more political importance than it deserves: it is immature melodrama, on a level with our dime novels and the fiction of our pulp magazines. The only question of importance it raises is why Dr. Blossom, who is known as the translator of Proust, should have translated it, and, indeed, why it should be translated at all. All that one can say about the author's understanding of his subject is that if strikes actually were similar to this one he presents, all workers would be strikebreakers, and there would not be any strikes.

* *

Robert Cantwell, one of the younger novelists of the proletarian school, is the author of "Laugh and Lie Down" and "The Land of Plenty."

Catholic Fireside

THE ANTEROOM. By Kate O'Brien. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by SARAH M. CLEGHORN

THE best element of this interesting second novel by Kate O'Brien is the solid existence of the family life and its Catholic habit and inheritance, going on, as it were of its own accord, behind and through the story of these autumnal holy-days during which a pair of star-crossed sisters struggle for and against each other. There is melodrama in the story; in the background there is none. This unobtrusive background, moreover, plays the principal part in the story; plays it so quietly that the reader only gradually, and toward the end, discovers how universal its influence has been.

The mother of the family, long ill, is painfully dying. A "triduum," three days' concerted prayers and masses, is undertaken for her; the members of the family and household, with varying degrees of faith and skepticism, affectionately and humbly join in this; and in the end, every one of them (though chiefly absorbed, all the time, by his own particular desires) contributes by hook or crook some honest sacrifice of part of his desires for the benefit of some other member. The total result is soberly comforting.

Of course an old reader, perusing a young writer's novel, is bound to miss a good deal from its field of vision. Teresa's slowly culminating approach to death, for instance, has no effect on her scale of values. No "air of coolness plays upon her face"; nothing in her nature expands to meet "the width of the waters." And characters like these rich, idle people always seem trying to monopolize the reader's sympathy for a cushioned existence narrower than anything one ever sees in life. They occupy an anteroom indeed, one feels sometimes like saying, or they would realize that some people's mothers, while also dying of cancer, are without nurses and quiet and comfort and space, which the money and leisure of the Mulqueens could supply.

So much for a set of limitations common to many novels, which "The Anteroom" does nothing worse, of course, than share. Unlike many of these others, "The Anteroom" has powerful compensations. Its action has been conceived with strength and originality. The bony structure of the novel is firm and shapely, and it concludes with a fine sense of proportion. Admirable, I think, is the candor which the author displays toward almost every character.

To several recent novels, which have been made attractive by their familiar glimpses into everyday Catholic living, "The Anteroom" adds a welcome picture of its own.

From the jacket of "The Anteroom"

A Daring Young Man

(*Continued from first page*)

but he has never written a story to formula. His honesty is sterling, but all the honesty in the world is no good to a writer if he has not something all his own to say and a certain way of saying it that makes you stop and listen. Fortunately Mr. Saroyan has these gifts.

Mr. Saroyan may not know it, but he also has what is called in the theatre "showmanship," what is called in salesmen, "personality." That is merely to say that you can't be a writer of any moment unless you have these things. They do not necessarily connote the blatant or the meretricious. There is nothing either blatant or meretricious about young Mr. Saroyan's writing. There is simply his intense curiousness about life, such curiousness as was possessed by the earlier Sherwood Anderson.

Some of Saroyan's stories seem to have no particular beginning, middle, or ending. They roam around until they complete some sort of evolution at the end. Some of them are hardly stories at all. But Mr. Saroyan flies through the air with the greatest of ease and in the end you are left with something more worth thinking about than whether young Dick Pennyworthy did make good with his employer, or did discover who murdered Cecily Diamondust, or satisfactorily explained to her her complete misunderstanding of the compromising situation in which he was found with Beatrix Highbosom. Such stories are a drug on the market and appear in all the magazines over and over again. Mr. Saroyan has properly eschewed them. Also he knows why they ought to stop committing suicide in the movies; in other words he knows fake drama when he sees it, and concocted plot. He knows that life isn't at all like that, and what he is interested in is recording a little of life and not making up impossible romances or melodramas however thrilling. He listens to life, as the man in one of his stories listens to a phonograph record:

> Somewhere in the racket he would be able, by listening carefully, to hear the noblest weeping or laughter of mortality. Sometimes it would be a sudden and brief bit of counterpoint, several chords of a banjo perhaps, and occasionally it would be the sadness in the voice of some very poor vocalist singing a chorus of a very insipid song. Something largely accidental, something inevitable.
>
> You could not do this with the finer music. The virtues of the finer music were intentional. They were there for everybody, unmistakably.

Try and tell me that a man who so expresses himself can't write!

But try and tell me also that a young writer isn't wrong when he indulges in something as turgid as "Big Valley Vineyard" or something as "arty" as "The Big Tree Coming," or something as time-wasting as "A Cold Day," or something as trivial and ineffective as "Dear Greta Garbo," or something as truncated as "A Curved Line." In each of these he is at sea in an open boat and seems to have no understanding of what he is about. Whereas he knows perfectly what he is about in "The Daring Young Man," "Seventy Thousand Assyrians," "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8," "Snake," "Seventeen," "Harry," "Laughter," "The Man with the French Post Cards," "Love," "War," "Fight Your Own War," and "Common Prayer."

In other words the coals of fire are not always upon Mr. Saroyan's tongue, and yet it is sufficiently noteworthy how often he writes something that sinks deep in. In a basket of apples there are sure to be some inferior ones. (Mr. Saroyan would remind me that he did not promise me golden apples). And only a master writes a book of short stories all of which have their decided merits. And other minds will differ with me as to which are Mr. Saroyan's best. Here is variety anyway, and you can pick and choose. Incidentally I may say that, along with the poignant, the mocking, and the sardonic, Mr. Saroyan possesses a lively sense of humor which he not infrequently turns upon himself, though no one can present better than he the tragic perplexities of youth in an industrial civilization such as ours is at present.

I feel about Mr. Saroyan as I felt once about Sherwood Anderson, that here is a man who can upon occasion move you intensely and tell you something profoundly significant, and at other times can go rambling on to himself through a conglomeration of thoughts and bits of observation that do not cohere into anything really worth your while. But this young writer has made an astonishingly good start and has branched out in a variety of directions. When he finds the thing he can do best or the several things he can do best he may greatly increase his stature. As it is, he is a new writer of power, with evidence of a fine mind. He needs to learn a lot; but he has already become a distinct and living person.

Murder for Profit

THREE MEN DIE. By Sarah Gertrude Millin. New York: Harper & Bros. 1934. $2.50.

THE subject of murder, which has for so long made its appearance in fiction merely as the preliminary laying of the drag to give us the excitement of hunting, is beginning to be granted its own peculiar fascination, as the supreme calamity for one human being, the supreme exercise of power for another. In

SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN
From a drawing by Elsa Hartmann

the best recent detective stories there is the recognition that a murder is to its witnesses something more than a three-move problem; and we are being given books like "Before the Fact" and "Harriet," which depend not upon the detection of the crime but on the horror of its foreseen approach, or the spectacle of the mind of the murderer. In "Three Men Die," Mrs. Millin appears to have had some idea of attempting a book of this sort, for she has written a murder story which is certainly not a detective story. It deals with a little middle-class household in Johannesburg, where the wife poisons her first two husbands for their money, and then, while married to a third husband, poisons her own son because he is beginning to suspect.

While this woman is not a monster of avarice, she is, as the book stands, a monster of some other and unexplained kind. The serenity with which she attends her three men as they die in agonies she has caused might be made comprehensible by a full analysis of her; but there is none. If there is any reason in nature for these hard hearts, it is not given to us. And if "Three Men Die" does not attempt the explanation of a soul which might have been one foundation for it, it misses the terror of inevitability which is the only other base on which it might have been built.

Although she is not writing a mystery story, Mrs. Millin seems to have been led astray by the mystery-story technique. Until the closing episodes she never admits that she is dealing with a murderess. The deaths, highly suspicious as they are, are presented as being possibly natural; and she even descends to such downright misleading passages as "It was with a sense of finite occurrence Julia ministered to him. He was going. She knew it." Considering that she had given him a quantity of strychnine, she could hardly have failed to know it, but the author seems to imply that she knew it from watching him. And Julia seems so inadequately presented as a murderess that halfway through the book one still wonders occasionally if she is innocent, and what in that case the point of the book can be. It is a fatal indecision of technique.

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Keen, Quick, but Not Hard-Boiled

CITY EDITOR. By Stanley Walker. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co. 1934. $3.

Reviewed by CHARLES MCD. PUCKETTE

FEW city editors write books. Few emerge from the obscurity which enfolds so many news executives. The second-rate feature writer with a by-line is better known to the readers of a newspaper than the city or managing editor who selects the staff and guides it. One can count upon the fingers of one hand the members of Mr. Walker's tribe whose names would be recognized by citizens about town of above-the-average intelligence. There was a sentence in the old morning *World*, about a brilliant editorial writer who got his name in the paper by dying, and his epitaph read: "He spent his great talents writing editorials he did not sign for a newspaper he did not own."

The able and facile Mr. Walker of the *Herald Tribune* is an exception, and in these days of the spotlighting of many

STANLEY WALKER SHOWING HOW TO ACT WHEN A HOT TIP COMES IN
Photo by William H. Zerbe

personalities he is a journalistic figure of note. Keen, quick, interested in every detail of the endless moving picture of life which shows itself to the city editor daily he writes about his craft in a style which seems fresh from the reporter's typewriter, written to catch an edition. He does not borrow a bookish manner of writing just because he is to be between cloth covers, but writes an informal and colorful story. His is a volume to interest newspaper men and women, and the general reader too.

The quality of Mr. Walker's frankness is engaging. Most of his comments upon particular newspapers deal with New York City's journals, and he criticizes his own along with the rest—for example, concerning sports news stories, "the *Herald Tribune's* usually contain all the facts, written by experts, but they often are erratic, with stories of unusual competence beside a childish essay." He hands out praise impartially and fairly among the city's press, and most of his observations are shrewd and well-founded.

Perhaps it justly can be said that much of Mr. Walker's material is ephemeral, that his many personal references are to people and events of the day or decade. But this is no severe indictment against a man who deals in a type of publication in which every day the world is made new. His illustrations of his general observations are the more interesting because he refers to men now turning out the daily grist of news, and cites them as examples. He is no historian of days past, but a chronicler of the present.

Mr. Walker would be more than human if he did not echo the time honored lament of newspaper men that the reporters of today do not dig for news so hard as those of old times. This is the only betrayal of middle age in a book otherwise youthful. And iconoclastic as he may be in his bowling over of some of the shibboleths of the craft, he is regular (and, this reviewer thinks, mistaken) in his sarcastic comments upon the specialist reporter. Many newspaper men look forward hopefully to the day when the newspaper will be read with respect by the expert, and with understanding by the layman, and to that goal the well informed specialist reporter is likely to make a larger contribution. Whether Mr. Walker or Mr. Henry W. Taft wins in the sparring over the reporting of legal news by especially qualified men, it is a fact that such news, even in the best newspaper, is far from being as good as it ought to be.

Mr. Walker at times seems to be writing for his own profession, but the general reader probably will find the book all the more interesting for that. He devotes a chapter to newspaper "don'ts"—fewer and fewer newspapers have such lists now. William Cullen Bryant's "Index Expurgatorius" of the old *Evening Post* was a famous one. Pulitzer's "Don't make a fool of the paper" was one of the best codes. Mr. Walker writes of libel, of codes of ethics, of press agents, of photographers, of why some newspapers died, and why some grow, and of women reporters, all in racy style. He denies the popular belief that all city editors are hard boiled (in Mr. Walker's phrase "agate-eyed Torquemadas") and of the Charles Chapin type. He is as surprising as the day's news in suggesting here and there that journalism might be more purposeful, and then being quite doubtful about it after all.

Some may reasonably object that a few of Mr. Walker's anecdotes of newspaper men give point to movie and stage interpretations of the city room. Others may complain that he does not preach the noble aims and purpose of journalism. But this is not a commencement address of a dean in a school of journalism. It is a keen city editor talking out loud, and what he says makes a readable book.

Slow Motion

THE AMERICAN. By Louis Dodge. New York: Julian Messner, Inc. 1934. $2.50

HERE is a novel of Americans laid in the middle of the nineteenth century and running to 634 pages. It is the story of Leander Calvert who settles in western Illinois and then leaves it to go to California just a bit later than the 49'rs. It is also the story of Leander's several sons, his neighbors the Cavendishs, and others. It is written in a bald style and toils along like a prairie wagon. Everything seemed to us to take a long time to happen, except possibly the degeneration of Mrs. Cavendish after she left her husband who had turned back from the Santa Fé trail to return to Illinois and become a successful merchant tailor. Mrs. Cavendish changed her mind about going to California also, but she had seen a sort of villain-still-pursued-her individual in Independence, the rallying-point for wagon trains bound for the Southwest—and she disliked her husband. And the villain's name was Jake Falcon, though he never had any truck with her. So she ran away to try and see him again, and went to the demnition bow-wows.

One trouble with Mr. Dodge's characters, it seems to us, is that we are told a lot about them but that there are far too few illuminating touches concerning the characters in action to make them more than people that are written *about*. We do not mean that the story is without dramatic action. It is not. You would think that Jesse's being scalped by the Indians and found so by his searching father, his father's later discovery of gold in California under peculiar circumstances, the father's return after having nearly been killed by the plotting Bogards, and a number of other episodes would be absorbing. They are not, because everything in the book is led up to by pages and pages of plodding description; and often just as we have become interested in the fortunes of a character, as in those of Jesse at the very beginning of the book, that character is dropped to be taken up much later, and we turn back to the story of others. The book is unwieldy, needs the blue pencil, and what is sometimes referred to as "pointing up." The manner of writing is undistinguished. Mr. Dodge knows his period, and has his material ready; there is good interesting stuff in his story, underneath its verbiage lies the real American past, a vision of it with a broad sweep; but the fact remains that there are too many forced marches through these pages.

The Watermark of Mr. Hergesheimer

THE FOOLSCAP ROSE. By Joseph Hergesheimer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1934. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

BACK in 1917, when it was still something of a rarity for an American writer to use the life cycle of a business enterprise as material for fiction, Mr. Hergesheimer published "The Three Black Pennys," that excellent saga of a Pennsylvania family and their iron foundry. It has generally been considered one of his most successful books, stronger in characterization and less affected in prose than much that he has written since, and it undoubtedly helped materially in establishing his reputation. Seventeen years later he has gone back to much the same matter and the same scene in "The Foolscap Rose." Like the earlier novel, it is concerned with the successive generations of a family primarily interested in business, and dominated, consciously or unconsciously, by it.

The Pennys were "in" iron and steel, though the third generation declined, lamentably, until it cared more for the music of Gluck than for the latest thing in post-Bessemer processes. The Wigtons and Kinzers of "The Foolscap Rose" were paper makers, from the days when everyone in the family, down to the hired girl, participated in the rolling and drying of the fine handmade product, watermarked with a single rose, until the era of trust-busting and the Knickerbocker Bank failure, with which Mr. Hergesheimer ends his story. Accompanying the insistent theme of commercial development and decay is a chain of romances which comes to an appropriate full stop only when the infusion of new blood into the family gives real promise of renewing its strength,—an infusion accomplished, incidentally, in a manner reminiscent of the coming of the original Kinzer as a Germanic immigrant, to preside over the little paper mill by the Brandywine.

Although the canvas is unduly crowded at times, and the dramatic values often cut off with curious abruptness as they reach a climax, yet "The Foolscap Rose"

JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER

is in many ways the best work Mr. Hergesheimer has given us in recent years. His people are sometimes a little self-conscious and angular, created with greater subtlety and more cleverness than were the Pennys, but perhaps with less feeling and less real affection on the part of the author. Seemingly, as he has grown older, Mr. Hergesheimer's attitude to humanity has become at once more detached and more bitter than it was, until he no longer cares greatly about people save as figures against a background,—fortunately here a background suited to his talents as few of the more languorous and exotic climates of his recent novels have been. Possibly he has lost his faith in fiction as a medium, or is it solely a result of the bad shaking we have all had since 1917?

In any case, his new book contains much that is fine, particularly in its earlier episodes, where the elaborate mechanism of the narrative is less apparent. There is a feeling for the detail of the period, as well as some amusing and timely political talk and a number of convincing and logical characterizations. Later the Kinzers and their relatives become a trifle dull, and the paper mill seems a poor substitute for the intrinsically grandiose fire, iron, and steam of the forge. Comparisons aside, however, it is a hopeful and significant thing that Mr. Hergesheimer after so much preoccupation with people and themes much less healthy and relevant to our present problems should come back in satisfying fashion to what is more or less his native scene, and still be able to do it justice.

Life for Its Own Sake

(*Continued from first page*)

> hearts. This division did not correspond to definite social classes. . . . There might be Meek among the rich, and Proud among the poor. There might be Meek people who little by little, as though in response to the flow of sap, raised themselves to the rank of the Proud; and there might be Proud people who mysteriously found the path of humility.

M. Romains uses this division for what it is worth, and without sententiousness. Two of the long stories here are stories of the Proud: we follow the liaison of the Comtesse de Champcenais with Roger Sammécaud to its untimely fruition; we see an ambitious real estate project put in operation by the enterprising Haverkamp and his wealthy associates. In the third of the stories we return to a working-class family, and share with the boy, Louis Bastide, whose father is out of a job, his premature experience of a hard and inexorable situation. Meanwhile we do not lose sight of the students Jallez and Jerphanion; we follow Quinette to a surprising and dramatic consequence of his crime; we become well acquainted with the Abbé Jeanne and his work among the poor of Montmartre. And the introduction of other new characters, whom we only glimpse, is like the appearance of a thread of a new color in an unfinished tapestry, or the first statement of a *leit-motiv* in a Wagner opera.

No synopsis can begin to convey the quality of "Men of Good Will." That quality, in a word, is reality. Here is life for its own sake; here are people whose thoughts and actions are so real that they become as absorbing to the reader as his own thoughts and actions. This effect of complete, engrossing actuality is one for which Tolstoyan is not an unreasonably large epithet; readers who know that quality in Tolstoy will recognize something very like it here. One thinks of Paris as being populated by the characters of "Men of Good Will"; and certainly no reader of Jules Romains will again walk through Passy without some thought of Marie de Champcenais; or will pass along the rue Vaneau without wondering in which house the Saint-Papouls lived; or will climb the streets of Montmartre without encountering Louis Bastide running errands for his mother, Jallez and Hélène Sigeau walking home from school arm-in-arm, and Clanricard on his way to a socialist meeting.

There has been considerable premature speculation about "Men of Good Will." Critics in France received it, at first, with a certain skepticism. M. Romains has been accused of being not an artist but a photographer—sometimes on the ground that his novel has no design, sometimes because he gets along without the paraphernalia of abnormal psychology. (He has also been accused, on very flimsy evidence, of being a fascist; though what difference this would make, any more than if he were a Buddhist or a vegetarian, is hard to say.) The later volumes, however, have been honored even in M. Romains's own country; there has been some penetrating and distinguished treatment of his work; and one critic, who complained earlier that the book had no unity of action, that it was not a novel, and that it did not properly represent the aspect of Paris, has capitulated to the extent of saying: "An author endowed with so great an intelligence, nourished by so prodigious an experience, is assuredly something more or better than an artist." It is, we repeat, too early to speculate as to the final significance of "Men of Good Will." Meanwhile, M. Romains is writing a novel which will enrich and intensify the experience of any one who reads it.

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The Bowling Green

VII. Culebra

WE had a delicious dump of rain in the Culebra Cut, straight crystal stripes of water, the vertical lines of pour as close together as the straws of a broom, yet each one, apparently, separate. The actual physics of rainfall must be very interesting. Every spout and scupper drummed and gurgled. The chief officer, in oilskins and sou'wester, standing by with the carpenter on the focsle (to let go the anchor if need be) tucked in his head like a yellow turtle. The rain was so thick I could not properly see the bronze memorial tablet (to Gaillard and his men) on the rocky side of the passage. Culebra of course means snake: whether the name was due to some special nest of serpents found there, or to the bends of the canal, I don't know. That most famous bit of the working is now generally called the Gaillard Cut. It is easy to see that the engineers had their troubles. Great masses of fallen rock, raw flanks of red soil, show what has occasionally happened. Dredges, floating derricks and machine shops, are moored at Gamboa with steam always under pressure. They have proud and cheerful names, something like *Hercules* and *Titan;* I wish I had made exact note of them. It looks as though the bad places in the cut had now been scraped far enough back to be under control, but an earthquake is always possible in that region. (That same morning we had heard of a quake some way up the Panama coast [near David, I think?] and a fellow passenger told me seriously that a United Fruit Company pier up there had dropped a mile under water. He was an accountant, too; presumably a rigorist in figures. I should love to know what were the actual facts.)

The banks of the Canal in this slithery part have been sown with strong-rooted grasses, to help hold the soil together. Just so, I was about to say to myself, did Walt Whitman sow his Leaves of Grass on some of the most insecure slopes of the mind . . . but I promised myself not to deform the Canal with double meanings.

Except for a side glimpse of the old French workings, and little ends of rusted rails sticking out from the rock, high up the side of Gold Hill showing where the old construction line ran, there are few evidences, between Gatun and Pedro Miguel, that this was not a genuine river. "The greatest liberty man has ever taken with nature," said Bryce; but Nature, in the feminine way, has condoned and rewarded the impudence.

The management of the Canal gives a strong impression of order and efficiency. Accidents happen, of course; sometimes a cable snaps, or a ship may catch a gust of wind just as she enters a lock and take a sideways sheer; but to the eye of the observer the whole routine is marvellous in care and dispatch. Each lock is a park where gasoline lawnmowers are at work on the lawns, and the embankment of the great Gatun Dam is a golf course. The Canal is under strict military surveillance at the present time; a platoon of tents was laid out on each lock terrace, and men with bayonets on sentry go along the piers. This was remarked by oldtime passengers as something new.

The great gates swing to behind you, the handrail of the gangway across them rising automatically at the same time. The water churns and heaves under the hull, the great ship rises smoothly, perceptibly. After the three steps up, at Gatun, you look astern and see the Atlantic far behind you and below. The electric mules, double-ended motors with an ingenious capstan, warp her along. As they take the steep hump from one level to another, these engines make a loud braying squealing sound. Hence, I daresay, their nickname.

It's odd that none of the maps show the bends and twists—almost right-angle turns, some of them—in the deep-cut part of the Canal. The ship slows down almost to standstill, her whistle booms and echoes in the narrow gorge. I was never quite happy, by the way, about *Santa Maria's* whistle. She's an oil-burning motor-ship and has no steam; consequently her siren is a sort of huge buzzer, a glorified automobile horn. I miss the husky mellow chord, the deep roaring threat and dignity, of the old steam whistle, jetting its plume of pride.

All through the Canal the passengers are alert and excited. We skip from side to side, forward and aft, even up the ladder to the very topmost deck where the engineers play tennis and basket ball. This is not really a deck, more (if Captain Cook will allow the word) a roof over the sports deck and not officially available for passengers. The dog kennels are up there; also an occasional stowaway (until the mate finds him), but he soon regrets it, for the brig is handy. The forward funnel is the brig: a fine, big, airy cell inside the dummy stack, with a barred window giving a superb lonely view. Either by indolence or a habit of deference to ship's etiquette I never visited this open promenade until we were in the Canal, but I immediately christened it (for my own purposes) the Silence Deck and found it thereafter ideal for strolling and stars. If the night is dark and windy, however, be wary of the big fishnet surrounding the engineers' tennis court. Groping under or through it you can get wound up like a fly in a web.

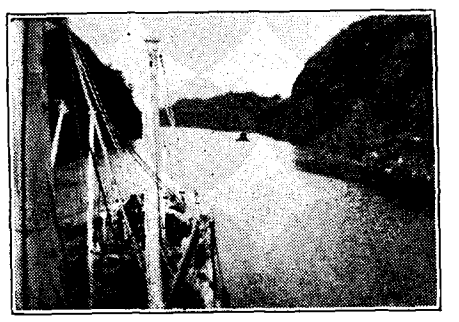
That solitary topside is a grand place to watch the evening movies, thrown on a screen alongside the after mast. Not so much the picture itself as the whole spectacle of the picture being shown al fresco, the ship's company sitting below on the hatch, the passengers in decorous rows above, the flitting shadows on the screen and the loud grinding, crackling, surresonating voices bursting out of the sound box —which sways gently on a cable in mid-air. There is the slow shine and fade of cigarettes below, the wide glitter of stars above. The pictures, I suspect, are chosen with care for a least common multiple of taste; and how delightfully meaningless are the howls of Tarzan or the neigh-and-whinny of some wild horse panorama (I forget its name) when heard from above on a night of tropic stars. Even the dog in his kennel (the only other listener up there with me) was not fooled, but lay quite impassive.

FLAT ARCH, PANAMA CITY

But I was saying that the passengers get a real thrill out of the Canal. The Spanish-Americans (presumably they have seen it before) are noticeably less excited than ourselves. Yet on our return voyage even the Three Nuns, who lived otherwise in a sacred abstraction, became secular enough to show some curiosity about the working of the locks. I saw them, in file as usual, standing on the bridge to watch. This was very likely our kindly commander's gesture to console them for a fright they had had. They were sisters of some French order; demurely they paced the deck with eyes downcast upon their breviaries. They ate by themselves in the children's dining-room, they turned their chairs inward toward the deckhouse for meditation. Repeatedly they crossed themselves against the disorders of the deep; or perhaps at some secret tabulation of mortal error. The face of piety is never more convincing than upon a *religieuse* who in addition to her vocational humility feels also the strong interior qualm of a wambling gizzard. But matters being so, one night a passenger was taken with a psychopathic lapse. I shall not be specific; it was an aberration most frequent and in the relentless chemistry of nature. But it took the form (or so said report) of beating on the door of these sisters' cabin at a midnight hour. In the sincerity of some hallucinated despair the sufferer bespoke the nuns to rouse themselves, for the ship was sinking. And the most unmaritime sisters, only too ready to suppose that human unworthiness must expiate, hastened into robes and trimmings and fled to the boats. That this actually happened I cannot vouch; every well-ordered ship is wisely secret about the details of her endless astonishment. But equal strangeness undoubtedly did. Shall I forget the evening when a hardy soldier of fortune, dressed (for a costume party) in full wartime panoply of the Colombian army, was waving an enormous revolver at the cocktail table. With illustrative gesture it passed to and fro among ladies and juveniles, its innocence warranted by our hero. It came to my hand, and I found it loaded.

We seem, like those spouts and gutters, to overflow our theme. But one word more about the rain. Those heavy clouds you see, off to your left, over the hills of the Chagres valley—in a direction you naturally suppose S.W., but really N.E.—are the motive power of the Canal. It is the overflow of the Chagres River, fed by Panama's eight or so feet of annual rainfall (in the interior) that supplies light and power for the whole operation. This is harnessed at the Gatun spillway, and there you find most soldiers and guns to prevent any Rape of the Lock.—Nor need one suppose that the Canal is something finished and complete. An enormous new barrier, the great Madden Dam, is just now being finished some miles up the Chagres River to control and regulate the flow in case of any possible drought.

Softly our *Maria* takes her two steps down at Miraflores, and the way is open to the Pacific. As you slide along that last reach of Canal you are so intent looking for the new ocean you may not notice that the sun is setting on the wrong side of you —apparently in the North. As a matter of fact you are 20 miles or so farther East than you were at the Atlantic end. The



IN CULEBRA CUT

(Photo by Charles Woodard)

harbor of Balboa is serene in the dusk. Lying at anchor is a beautiful schooner-yacht bound on a fishing trip to Galapagos: this we know from one of our fellow passengers who is going in her as guest. Now again the crowd is all agog about night clubs. The Miramar, I hear it bruited about, is the place to go. The only other places I hear mentioned are the relics of Old Panama (about seven miles away; an overgrown tower and a few clumps of stonework remain of the town sacked by Sir Henry Morgan in 1671) and a certain famous flat arch in the ruins of the church of San Domingo. This is said to be an architectural paradox; according to customary formulæ it couldn't possibly support the weight. But as the church is in ruins, perhaps it didn't? What I would most enjoy would be to climb Ancon Hill, the commanding knob that overhangs Balboa. But one wouldn't see much at night; and besides it's an official reservation I believe, not approachable without permission.

So I have not much to report of Balboa and Panama City since we were there both times in the dark. There is the same contrast between the two as at Cristobal-Colon. Balboa is Northamerican, the administrative headquarters of the whole Canal Zone; Panama, a gay and frolicsome city of some 70,000, is the capital of the Republic. One divines at once a keen rivalry or jealousy between the Atlantic Side and Pacific Side; with, frankly, the odds both of scene and climate in favor of the Pacific. There will be plenty of touring cars waiting outside the pier to drive you over to Panama in the warm scented evening; but if you go afoot to explore you will soon stumble on a delightful little trolley car which is more amusing and much cheaper. You'll have a chance to admire the superb avenue of royal palms that leads up to the Canal Administration Building. If it was a tree of that sort which Sir Francis Drake clambered up for his first view of the Pacific he was a puissant climber.

The night is soft and hot. The tram threads a winding course past a cemetery, barrooms, odd little shops, glimpses of native interiors in tawny kerosene light, puts you down in a lively small plaza where the citizens are out for the after-dinner *paseo*. A fine old church shines pink in the brightness. Someone told me afterward that this was where the gold-plated altar was whitewashed to conceal its wealth from Morgan the buccaneer. On reflection, how can this be? The present city of Panama was not built, I think, until after the destruction of its predecessor in Morgan's raid. Anyhow the big wooden doors were shut when I got there, and a brown dog couched against them was gently chafing himself into nescience. I strolled rather blankly along the exciting pavements of the Avenida Central, and saw some of our passengers rolling in open cars toward the fabled night clubs. But it had been a long day afoot, and the pedestrian was reminded of the flattened arch. Back at her pier *Santa Maria* lay large and brilliant, solid and familiar. The smoke-room, deserted now, was a fine place for ginger beer and the detective story. Perhaps I should add that this book, the only one I actually read on the southward voyage, has utterly vanished from my mind. I pursued it methodically, perhaps twenty pages every evening, but as a spiritual creature I was no higher than the slumbering dog at the church door. The story was of that exquisite mediocrity which in no way disturbs the intellect. I can't remember its author or title; not even its publisher.

(To be continued)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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The Literature of Horror

(*Continued from page* 218)

pend upon his own problems; but they may also come from an intimate association with others who have dramatized the problem before his eyes. Therefore we must say clearly that in writing about "Sanctuary" and the relationship of horror literature to fears of impotence, we are not in any personal sense writing about William Faulkner.

The story is in two parts. In the first a young college girl, named Temple Drake, is landed by her drunken escort, Gowan Stevens, in the hands of a group of moonshiners. Stevens abandons her there; and after many false alarms and episodes of terror she is criminally assaulted by a member of the band, named Popeye. Popeye is suspected of having some negro blood. Also he is sexually impotent, and therefore must execute his purpose by indirect methods which are overwhelmingly brutal and revolting. Furthermore, just before the assault he shoots another member of the band, a kindly, feeble-minded fellow named Tommy, who is trying to protect Temple.

In the second half of the book Popeye has carried Temple off to a brothel in Memphis. Goodwin, the head of the moonshiners, is accused of both crimes and is convicted on the false testimony of Temple herself, despite the efforts of a lawyer named Horace Benbow. Finally the innocent Goodwin is burned by a lynching mob; Popeye is hanged by accident for a crime he did not commit; Temple is taken abroad by her father; and Horace Benbow, after a brief effort to live a free life, goes back into bondage to his wife and sister. This is the skeleton of the story.

The first part of the book is a troubled, and sometimes confused, nightmare, a nightmare which at moments is vivid and gripping, but which occasionally verges on slapstick and burlesque, with somersaults out of hay-lofts, rats that spring in the dark, dim figures that can be smelled in blackness, eyes that gleam in lightless corners, and so on. Yet all of this buffoonery is in subtle harmony with the sardonic and excruciating denouement. For it is the uttermost limits of sour irony that this impudent, tantalizing, and provocative young girl, who had played fast and loose with the men of her own world without ever giving them the gift she kept dangling in front of them, should escape the relatively honest erotic purposes of the healthy members of the band, only to taunt the impotent and tortured figure of Popeye into committing a criminal assault upon her by artificial means.

That Temple invited the assault with her provocative, if unconscious, exhibitionism, is unquestionable. Ruby Goodwin, the mate of the bootlegger, is made to say that if Temple had only stopped running around where they had to look at her all the time it would never have happened, but that Temple wouldn't stay any place—that "she just dashed out one door and in a minute she'd come in from another direction." Horace Benbow noted that Temple told her story with actual pride, "with a naive and impersonal vanity."

Furthermore, in the face of danger, Temple had a momentary hallucination that her body had changed into that of a boy. The rude awakening from this dream, and the shocking rediscovery of her unchanged anatomy gave rise to a secondary phantasy (one which is familiar enough to psychoanalysts in their study of illness, but rarely encountered in literature), in which there was a fusion of the ideas of rape, castration, and death. (*Cf.* the coffin phantasy.) From that moment, Temple behaves as though she herself were dead, and the blind, dead instrument of revenge. But the subtle and confusing thing is that she destroys first, not those who have hurt her, but those who have helped her. She kills the lover that Popeye procures for her. She kills Goodwin, the bootlegger, by giving false testimony against him. She crushes the lawyer who tries to help. It is only indirectly and in the very end that her taunts help to drive Popeye himself into a virtual suicide.

In the story there is no effort to explain why she sacrifices Goodwin, the potent man, to the furies of the mob and saves Popeye, her impotent malefactor. Popeye's disguised presence in the courtroom can hardly account for it. But Temple has by this time become an almost automatic engine of destruction. Perhaps one may venture the speculation that this paradoxical and perverted impulse to revenge herself on those who have not harmed her, but who are essentially normal in their masculinity, fits the whole history of her defiant, rebellious, and provocative attitude toward boys and men. Her career seemed to shape itself out of her hate of her father and her four stalwart brothers. It is almost as though she said, "To be a woman is worse than death or the same as death. Therefore I will take my revenge upon all you men who are really men. I will excite your desires, but I will not satisfy them. I will laugh in the face of your yearnings. I will gloat over you and scorn you as you drink yourselves into impotence. And finally I will be the instrument of your actual bodily destruction."

Throughout the second part of the book battles one good and valiant, but again feeble figure, that of Horace Benbow. He is a well-intentioned but powerless lawyer. He was "given to much talk and not much else"; and he said of himself, "I lack courage—the machinery is all here, but it won't run." Poor Benbow could not even scrub a floor, much less the community whose need for a scrubbing he felt so acutely.

The story of Benbow, like the story of Goodwin, runs through the book as a contrast to the more essential tale of Popeye and Temple. In his forty odd years Benbow had gradually built up a weak, wide-eyed, but gallant impulse to tilt against the smug and hypocritical forces of society which his sister, Narcissa, represented. In defiance of convention he had married a woman who had had to seek a divorce in order to marry him; and again in defiance of convention he had now left her. In the face of the mounting hostility of the community towards Goodwin, Benbow tried desperately to save him from an unjust conviction. But he was not strong enough to achieve this, and in the end merely accelerated and expedited his death.

Here the tale is a dramatization of the impact between the forces of instinctual evil (which are represented as rising up out of the pits of the underworld through Popeye and Temple) and the forces of an evil and savage conscience, operating through the blind vengefulness of a misdirected mob. It represents graphically the struggle which in psychoanalytic shorthand is known as the struggle between the Id (the reservoir of instincts) and the Super-ego (the all but blind forces of a conscience whose operation is by no means always rational and clear). Between the two stands this weak and feeble effort at a realistic dealing with life, embodied in the figure of Benbow. He is the weak representative of the much-battered "Ego," that fragment of the personality which is so often ground to pieces in the battle.

Beneath it all one feels the incessant struggle of Benbow against his own impotence and powerlessness. He is unable to defy the women who cramp him on all sides. All adult women seem to thwart him, to manage his life, to force him into channels towards which he has a revulsion. To carry a box of shrimps once a week from the railroad station to his home for all the years of his marriage, loathing the smell of them, hating the drip of them, identifying himself with "the small stinking spots," which left a trail behind him on the sidewalk, constituted his picture of marriage. Far deeper than that lay his incestuous yearnings for his stepdaughter. These tie him up in horror phantasies, in which he sees himself helplessly standing by while his stepdaughter, Little Belle, plays around with other men. In fact it is this which finally drives him from home. And towards the end of the book he is stirred to a dim recognition of his own impulses when her picture is described "as leaving upon his eye a soft and fading aftermath of invitation and voluptuous promise." At this point he becomes nauseated actively, and soon thereafter, giving in to the social pressure which forces him back to the hated protection of his sister, he returns to his wife. In other words, as

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he becomes conscious of his intolerable and unacceptable impulses, he experiences a direct revulsion of feeling which causes him to be sick, whereupon he gives up his frantic and compulsive rebellion against society.

The only figures in the book who take life in the body with simple, earthy realism, who hate and murder or love and make love wholeheartedly and without reservation, are Goodwin, the moonshiner, and his mate, Ruby. They alone do not think that "all girls are ugly except when they are dressed." They alone do not subscribe to the parable that "Adam paid no attention to Eve until she put on a figleaf." They alone are not moved to revulsions of feeling by excrement, by hunger, dirt, and bleeding, or by any of the other natural phenomena of the body's living. They alone have no fear of the body, be it male or female. They recognize Temple's impudent coquetry in the face of danger, her blind exhibitionism, her invitation of the final disaster. On her Ruby heaps withering scorn for "just playing at it"; yet she is jealous and fearful of Temple's presence because she knows that this tantalizing and provocative coquetry might in the end seduce Goodwin himself. Together they recognize the significance of that "high, delicate head," the "bold, painted mouth and soft chin," the "eyes blankly right and left looking, cool, predatory, and discreet." To them Temple is no innocent victim. They view her realistically. Perhaps that is why Goodwin must be killed, and Ruby cast out by the savage "conscience" of the community.

It may seem to some readers that the author's claim that the book "is a cheap idea, because it was deliberately conceived to make money" would invalidate any effort to study its contents seriously. This we cannot admit. The phantasy still remains as an expression of more forces than those which the author can consciously control. It is only when the nightmare becomes a little too garish, the horrors too gruesome with a touch of the slapstick, that one notes the tongue bulging in the author's cheek. Naive youths who rent a room in a brothel thinking it is a boarding house, the incredible funeral of Red and its solemn, drunken sequel at Reba Rivers's afternoon "tea" party—all make one chuckle a bit—but for the rest the tale stands firmly on its own unconscious sources. We have suggested above that this literature represents the working out in phantasy of the problems of impotence in men, meaning by impotence a frailty in all spheres of instinctual striving. In the end, however, this impotence always is seen to have a direct relation to psychosexual potency. It is as though sophisticated and civilized man is conducting a constant struggle against a sense of impending impotence, a struggle which seems to have in it three direct objects of fear, a fear of women, a fear of other men, and a fear of the community and of society in general. All of these three fears are dramatized in this story.

Furthermore, when a man feels unable to achieve some goal towards which he is struggling, he can in his phantasy handle his sense of powerlessness in one of several ways. In the first place he can people the whole world with other impotent figures, spreading his own sense of infirmity to include everyone, and thus reducing his feeling of painful humiliation. Thus we find in "Sanctuary" that every "respectable" man is in one way or another crippled, impotent, or silly. Only the negro who is hung, and the moonshiner who is burned alive, and Red, the dance-hall boy who is shot, are potent. This is true not only of the major figures, such as Popeye and Benbow, but also of such minor figures as Cla'ence Snopes, or the lamed district attorney, or Gowan Stevens.

Or, secondly, he may comfort himself in dreams of the ultimate triumph of the weak over the strong, of the impotent over the potent. Thus, as we have seen, in every line of the book evil and weakness triumph over goodness and strength.

Or he can turn with his rage against the sources of his humiliation and imagine them overwhelmed with disaster. Consequently, all women are made to grovel before men, whether it be Reba Rivers who keeps the brothel; or Ruby Goodwin who,

(*Continued on next page*)

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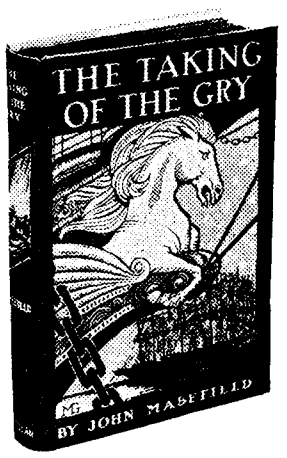

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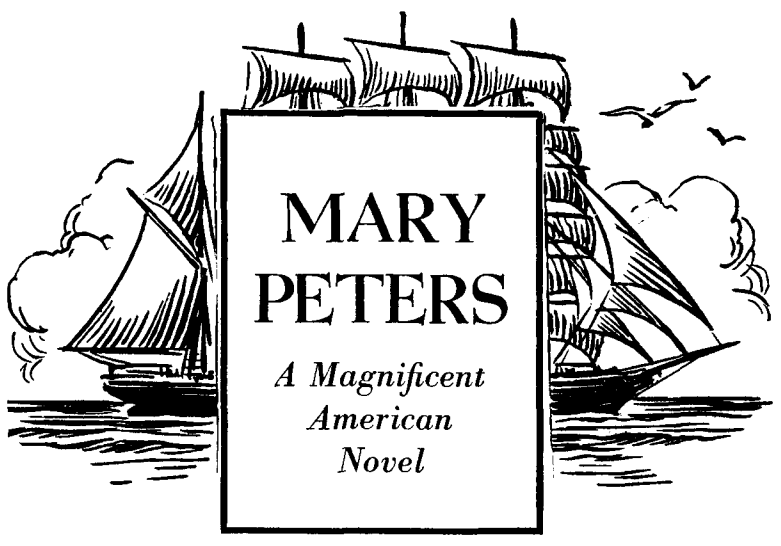

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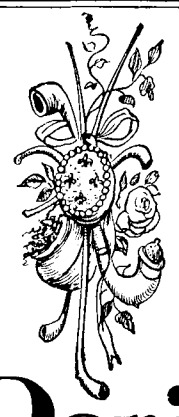

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The Literature of Horror

(Continued from preceding page)

though triumphant and defiant towards others, is ready to lick the boots of her mate; or Narcissa, who is jilted and falls in love with fools like Gowan Stevens; or Temple Drake, whose lean and immature body exists in the book only to taunt and tantalize men with promises which are never fulfilled, until finally the fulfilling of the promise is taken out of her hands and worked upon her with savage and sardonic vengeance by the sinister figure of the impotent Popeye.

Or again the sufferer from a sense of impotence can turn with sour scorn against the whole structure of society, seeing in it nothing but its pettiest aspects, corroding it with irony, taunting it with the failure of every decent effort at restitution or punishment, mockingly embodying all aspirations in the spirit of hypocritical and waspish women like Narcissa.

By all these devices man tries to evade the acknowledgment of his own instinctual helplessness,—yet none of those devices succeed. Just so Popeye, with intolerable suffering, has to bring in a potent male to mate with the woman with whom he himself can have no successful relationship. Here again one sees the actual living out of the primitive horror-ridden phantasy that arises so frequently in the male who is struggling with impotence fears, the fantasy of being helpless and bound while someone else rapes the woman he loves,—a fantasy which appears not only in the actual experiences of Popeye and Temple, but in the constant anxieties of Benbow about his stepdaughter, Belle.

There remains for the poor male only one other way out, one which never works too successfully, but which is always tried —that is, an effort to ridicule and make fun of his own yearnings, and thus to make his own frustrations more bearable. This appears in the book only in the passages of sudden burlesque.

Yet despite all such devices man cannot free himself from the terror and pain of impotence which break through in horror-ridden phantasies. And that is why, in the end, Popeye is so willing to escape, through the hangman's noose, the tyranny of fears which reigns in his heart. It is Popeye who shrieks like a child at a swooping owl, who in a panic shoots a harmless old dog who has sniffed at his leg, who sucks his cigarettes rather than smoking them, who tries to buy with gifts the girl he cannot woo, who is possessive and jealous, who suffers and yearns and wants and whinnies and froths, and all of whose frustrated yearnings turn to hate. And it is Popeye's very figure which is concretely described in the story in words which make it a graphic representation of the phallus whose impotence is the root of the whole tragedy.

And so, at the last, one is left to wonder about the name. Why "Sanctuary" in a tale in which there is no right of sanctuary, where neither impotence nor potency, neither the life of the defiant rebel nor that of the acquiescent conformist, where neither the free play of instinctual expression nor the life which is dominated by a restricting conscience, provides one with any escape from an ultimate state of doom and disaster? Why "Sanctuary" in a tale in which no one triumphs, and everyone fails? Where in such a horror-driven conception of living is "sanctuary" to be found? Perhaps it is not accidental that in the book the only figure who laughs is "Tommy, the feeb," the feeble-minded lad who sets himself to guard Temple and is shot for his pains. He suffers no unhappiness, but laughs even when his pet dog is shot, and undoubtedly would have chuckled over his own demise had he had time to do so. Perhaps here in this cloudy brain is the sanctuary which Faulkner had in mind. For the rest the term is a mockery which says, "There is no escape from anxiety, no escape from horror; therefore let us make of horror a gay tune to dance to and chortle over; let us roll it under our tongues; let us whistle in the dark to prove that we are not afraid; and let us write books about it, tell our friends, and 'hope they will buy it, too.'"

In the next article I shall discuss the very different phantasies which appear in the stories of Hemingway.

What Americans Do with Leisure

LEISURE—A Suburban Study. By George A. Lundberg, with collaboration by Mirra Komarovsky and Mary Alice McInerny. New York: Columbia University Press. 1934. $3.

Reviewed by PHILIP CURTISS

THIS is an original and intellectual work which, however, makes its appearance under two handicaps. For one of these the publishers are probably to blame. Either because of an unfortunate suggestion in the subject matter or because of a misdirected desire to attract readers outside of the academic world, the volume is presented in a highly pictorial jacket which, together with the disarming title and the seductive subtitle, "A Suburban Study," leads one to expect a pleasant rural meditation in the traditions of Ik Marvel or David Grayson. The dismay of the average reader on opening the book and finding it to be nothing of the sort will probably have a more unfortunate effect than would have resulted if the work had been presented in its proper staid coverings.

The second handicap was deliberately assumed by Dr. Lundberg himself with his eyes wide open. The volume, in brief, is a discussion of the frequently repeated question of what American men and women will do with the leisure promised not only by modern methods of production but by the freeing of the housewife from domestic duties, the disappearance of village and neighborhood social demands, and other developments of modern life. Dr. Lundberg and his associates do not attempt to answer the question but, as a means of bringing it fairly into view, they make a detailed study of what Americans do *now* with such leisure as they have. As a laboratory they take Westchester County, New York, with all of its inhabitants from negro bootblacks to masters of fox hounds.

The idea is admirable and the choice of field was inspired but, for making this highly human and elusive study, Dr. Lundberg has unfortunately bound himself to the chart, graph, and questionnaire methods of research which, every day, are bringing the social sciences in America nearer and nearer to the brink of absurdity. In some fields of inquiry it can be understood that such methods are the only possible ones but, considering the nature of the present subject and the results actually attained, Dr. Lundberg and his associates frequently give the impression of using a steam shovel to unearth a gnat or exploding a depth charge to bring up a periwinkle. For example, it seems hardly necessary to offer a graph to show that travel on suburban railroads is heaviest just after breakfast and just before dinner or to check 6,800 cases (as was actually done) in order to prove that commuters on trains read more newspapers than magazines and more magazines than books.

All this is very unfortunate because when Dr. Lundberg and his collaborators drop their laboratory gadgets and let themselves go they all write with exceptional clearness, grace, and force. In fact the chapter on reading and education, in which Dr. Lundberg virtually abandons his main subject and writes out of his belief and experience, is by far the best in the book. The point of view of the whole study is, moreover, admirably detached and fair. Unlike many writers in sociological fields, the authors neither sneer at the fashionable rich nor idealize the belligerent poor, although it might be wished that Dr. Lundberg could cease to regard all cocktail parties as "orgiastic" and that the phrase "keeping up with the Joneses" might have been allowed to die.

As the authors themselves attempt to reach no conclusions none can be expected from a reviewer but, on the whole, the evidence presented seems to be somewhat cheering. It was discovered that reading —of one sort or another—was still one of the leading leisure occupations of Westchester County, being surpassed only by eating and visiting and ranking well ahead of the radio and the movies. One saddening strain of testimony that emerged in the investigations was that individuals of all classes seemed to desire more leisure and more income simply that they might multiply their present tangible pleasures —have more theaters, more motors, and more travel—and the one outstanding conclusion of Dr. Lundberg was that added leisure would be of little value unless the beneficiaries could be made to realize that true leisure and true work, that is to say personal growth and achievement, can never be entirely separated.

As a single real criticism of an admirable and earnest book, one can only express some surprise that a man as clear-sighted and as firmly grounded as Dr. Lundberg should have fallen such an easy prey to the popular belief that the present era is really unique in the history of the world and that human life tomorrow will be of a nature never previously known. As Carlyle suggests, people living in periods of social disturbance always believe that.

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The PHŒNIX NEST

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

NOW we have what is called the "new play-novel form" in literature. *George Hetherington's* "Never Say Good-Bye," published by Play-Novel Publishers, 509 Fifth Avenue, has its chapters presented as a prologue and five acts, with different scenes in each act. I haven't read the book yet, but the new stunt seems to me merely a novelty in arrangement, and all as usual depends on how good the story is and how accomplished the writing thereof. . . . Says *Allen Klein* to whom it may concern: "We intend to issue, early in November, the first number of *The Lunatic Herald.* This will be a magazine in tabloid format, the content, as the name implies, made hilarious and romping. We will welcome manuscripts that fit into the above description, but at the present are unable to pay for same. *Allen Klein* and *Sidney Rothstein* are the editors. Communications should be addressed to the former at 984 Kelly Street, New York City." . . . *John Vassos,* the young Greek illustrator, lately returned to his home in New Canaan, Connecticut, from "fishing at Barnegat for blues and tuna." Mr. Vassos says he is "busy designing silver, and painting murals for the R. K. O. studios of Camden, New Jersey." . . . I was talking to *Irving Stone* the other night back-stage after a performance of *Joseph Anthony's* "A Ship Comes In," which has some good scenes in it, some clever lines, and tells one a good deal about a Viennese psychiatrist. Mr. Stone, as you know, is the author of the Van Gogh novel, "Lust for Life," and Longmans has informed me that if all the copies of that work shipped out of Longmans on the 26th of September had been piled flat on one another they would have reached the height of the Empire State Building—or—let's go on with it— if they had been stood end on end they would have reached more than five times as high as the Empire State Building, a shaft of books which could be sighted from an airplane over Boston through good binoculars on a clear day! In spite of all which I have heard great things about the book —heard them as far back as this summer —and it is one I am laying in for the winter. . . . *Father Ronald Knox,* who has a Dutton Clue Mystery out this month, says he puts in his leisure time writing books and making up sermons; "it is the only time I get for doing it!" . . . *Clemence Dane* is here again among us, or rather among Hollywood, to do a dramatization of *Tolstoy's* "Anna Karenina" in which Greta *Garbo* is to be starred. We are still faithful to you, Greta! . . . How *Alexander Woollcott* has been boosting *James Hilton's* "Lost Horizon" over the radio! He's still at it. I am now reading the book and enjoying it. . . . *Donald Gordon,* prognosticator of the American News Company, has given *Isabel Paterson's* new novel, "The Golden Vanity," his highest rating for sales. Her former novel sold fifteen thousand copies over and above its subscription sale as a selection of the Literary Guild. Hooray for you, Isabel, our arch-rival of *Books!* . . . *Julia Boyton Green* writes me that she ran across that Song by *Thomas Carew,*

Ask me no more if east or west
The Phoenix builds her spicy nest

and it occurred to her that a twig or two from Los Angeles, where she lives, might be acceptable, "though everybody knows," she says, "including Mr. Carew if he keeps in touch with mundane matters now, that the Phoenix Nest is permanently established in the East and is very spicy indeed." . . . Thank you very much, Mrs. Green, for a delightful compliment; and be assured that I used to read many of your verses in *Life* and elsewhere with genuine enjoyment. . . . *Marcia Flagg Heald* has sent me this lyric concerning certain favorite books of hers which you may have overlooked or forgotten. You know that lower Fourth Avenue is the domain of many of the great second-hand book emporia. So, if you strike a title you like in conning Mrs. Heald's poem, better hie you down to that vicinity and pick it up cheap!

LINES TO FOURTH AVENUE AND TWELFTH STREET

I know an author, name of Waugh,
Whose works are absolutely blaugh,—
And yet you cannot put them down
However may your husband frown.

His vision might be called broad gauge
And as you coyly end a page
Quickly you turn the next to see
What lies ahead in ecstasy—
For no dark depths, no dizzy heights
Can curb the Evelynish *flights.*

And if you know the ennui Gorgon
Just get in touch with Mr. Horgan.
His concerts, operas, Russian teas,
His millionaires, are bound to please.
They'll cheer you up, they'll make you gay,
And life is much more fun that way.

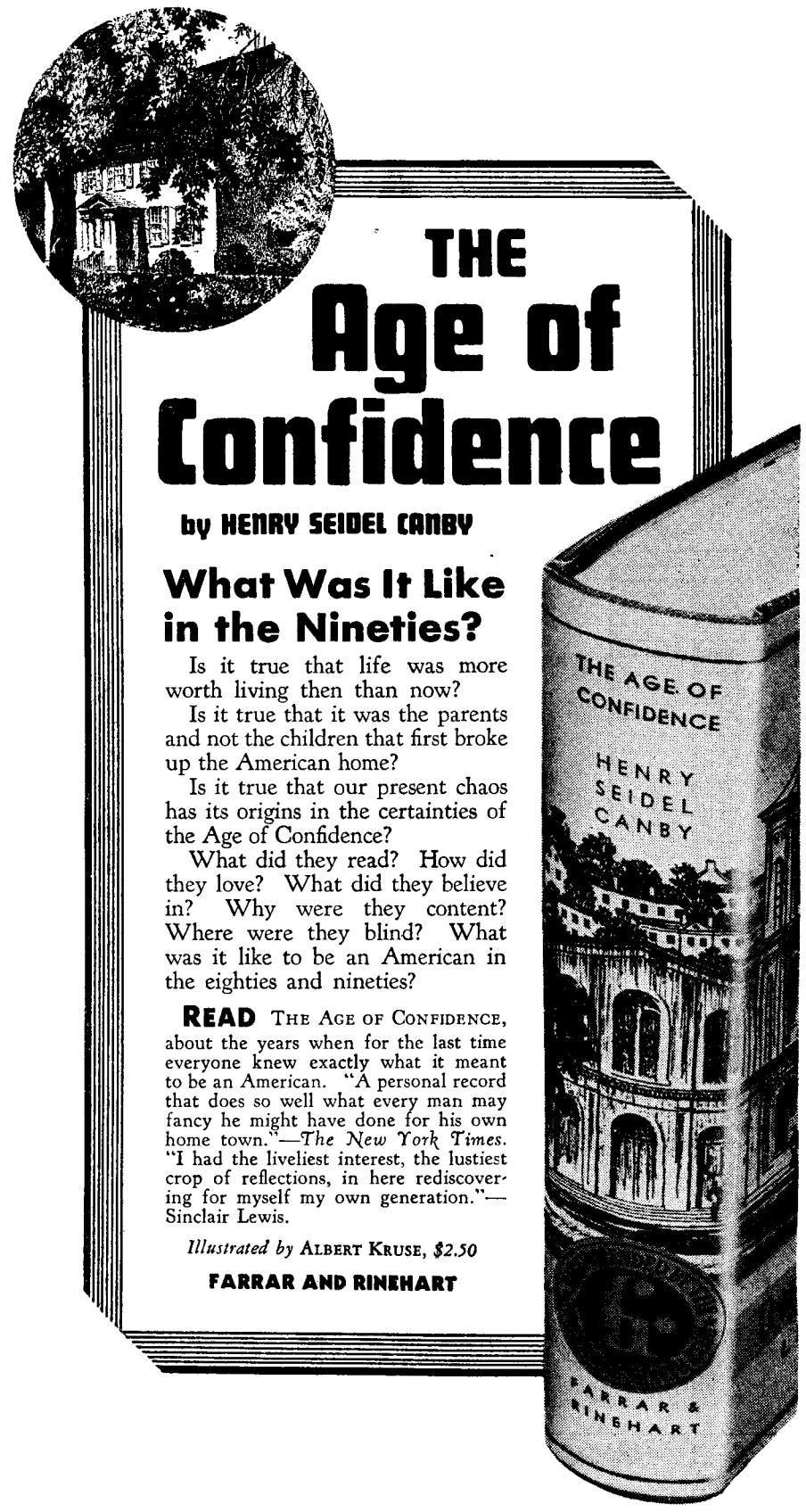
But if you seek a soberer shrine
We always have our Gertrude Stein.
Her words are erudite, immense,
Where thoughts or sentences commence
We scarcely know, we get so tense
As we pursue the hidden sense,—
But still we know they are immense,
It's only we that are so dense.

And I've been absolutely lost
In gratitude to young Miss Cost
Whose pen, with joy and tears and mirth
Translates us from this sordid earth.

And then, of course, if you are able
To stand such revelation, Mable
Will take you to her private nook
And give you, if you will, a look.

He did his bit, did Hervey Allen,
And Jules Romains *and* Sean O'Faolain.
Our morning daily has a list
Of bright young things that can't be missed.
Bring them in, Jeeves, *let down the bars,*
But—don't forget "The Two Hussars":
"Twenty-Six Men And A Girl" I crave
And that most indispensable knave,
The beauteous Vronsky and his Anna.
And Nehludof of the charming manner.
Don't let "The Wild Duck" get away,
It's cheerful stuff for a rainy day.
And if you long for a wholesome change
Join "The Virginian" on his range.
Too good to be true, you say? Then float
With four drenched souls in an "Open Boat."
The world is yours, just help yourself,
You'll find it all on the right-hand shelf.

News of *Charles J. Finger,* that voluminous writer of good books for old and young, is that he has been well fortified against the depression, with sixty sheep to eat, three steers, twenty-seven turkeys, a flock of chickens, some twenty geese, to say nothing of squirrel in the woods. Some time ago he caught a negro, who was not so well supplied, prowling about his chicken-yard. When challenged, the negro mumbled that it was the doctor's orders. "You mean to say, George, that Dr. Rigall told you to prowl around here?" demanded Mr. Finger. "Not 'xactly," George replied, "but he done tol' me to git chicken broth for my rheumatism." . . . *Hugh Walpole* is playing the role of the vicar in the M. G. M. production of "David Copperfield" for which he supervised the script. He is in distinguished company, which includes *Charles Laughton, Lionel Barrymore,* and *Roland Young.* . . . I am glad that a new novel by *James Gould Cozzens* is coming out in November, this time through Random House. His new novel, they say, is a tale of terror in the manner of Poe and Bierce and details the weird adventures of a man who finds himself locked alone in a huge nine-story city department store. *Robert Josephy* is designing the book. It sounds swell! . . . And Random House reminds me that they're putting *DuBose Heyward's* "Porgy" in the Modern Library, at the same time it is being fashioned into an opera by *George Gershwin,* scheduled for production by the Theatre Guild. . . . And, pardon this favoritism, *Donald Klopfer,* now in California for the Random House firm, was prevailed upon to take a screen test in Hollywood and acquitted himself so nobly that he was offered a prominent part in the new *Anna Sten* picture. . . . Listen, how about us? . . . *Lawrence Clark Powell,* the biographer of *Robinson Jeffers*—or rather the author of "Robinson Jeffers: The Man and His Work," writes me that he is doing secretarial work in *Jake Zeitlin's* book shop in Los Angeles, taking a small part in the direction of the Primavera Press, and that on a recent visit to Mr. Jeffers at Carmel the latter told him he had just completed a long narrative poem on Attila's wife, which, together with another narrative not yet written, will form his next book.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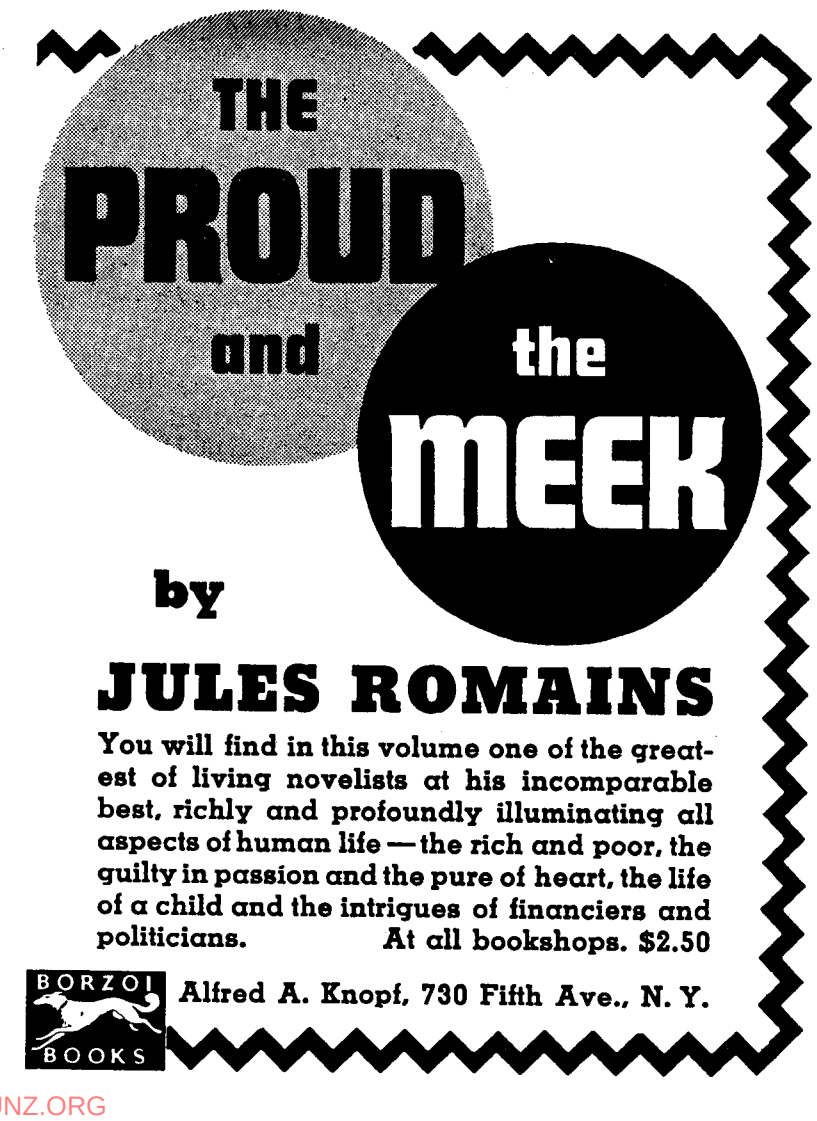
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THE HIGHEST CRITICAL STANDARDS

WE take pleasure in calling to the attention of everyone, but particularly the librarian, the passage from "The Library Journal" for October first, which we quote below. It is from *Book Reviewing in Review*, an article by Helen E. Haines.*

"Detailed commentary on the many book reviewing publications constantly used by librarians is impracticable. I will only say that the SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE still remains the only independent weekly periodical entirely devoted to books that is published in this country, and that it maintains, I think, higher critical standards than any other general book reviewing publication. It has an editorial personality and authority. . . ."

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE
25 West 45th Street, New York City

* Helen E. Haines is a well-known specialist in library work, an author, lecturer, and one time editor of "The Library Journal."

The New Books

Archaeology

NEW LIGHT ON THE MOST ANCIENT EAST: The Oriental Prelude to European Prehistory. By V. Gordon Childe. Appleton-Century. 1934. $4.

Within the last few years, archæologists have been less engaged in filling in the details of ancient history than in exploring its prehistoric background. To Egypt and Sumeria, as the earliest high civilizations, they have added a third, that of the Indus Valley, and are slowly uncovering the relationship of all three cultures through intervening regions.

In 1928 Professor V. Gordon Childe published his "Most Ancient East," in which he reviewed Egypt and Western Asia from the earliest human times to the beginning of the historical period. Since then Sumerian culture has been followed still farther into the past, and has shown continuity with several lesser civilizations, such as those of Jemdet Nasr in Lower Mesopotamia and Al Ubaid in Northern Mesopotamia and Iran. As we go backward in time the cultures of Mesopotamia seem to converge with those of Northwestern India, as if they had evolved from the same stock, and Elam shows more and more in common with both these centers. The "Royal Tombs" at Ur, however, have disclosed a culture somewhat divergent from early Sumerian, and the neolithic remains at Tell Halaf and allied sites in Northern Syria may be older than anything yet found in Lower Babylonia, and suggest far-flung affinities with Palestine and Crete.

Professor Childe has now revised his book to include these new discoveries and points of view. Readers unaccustomed to Near Eastern place-names or to the way archæologists define a culture from a small inventory of tools, ornaments, and pots, will at first be left in some confusion; but the richness and broad implications of the material will draw them repeatedly back to the text. For students the book has no equal, as the only readable, timely, and comprehensive treatment of the field.

W. C.

Fiction

THE WEB. By Hugh Brooke. Doubleday, Doran. 1934. $2.

This tale of horror is not the type of "mystery" story favored by our chief executives, political or commercial. It lacks the element of surprise and, therefore, has no need of the machinery of detection, no contrivance of false clues or carefully guarded denouement. Instead of starting from a fact of crime and focusing on the problem of its method or authorship, we begin with a setting and an atmosphere, haunted by fear and portentous with unnamed evil. That place of dread, Mulland Manor, stands closer to the House of Usher than to the Rue Morgue. Entering it from an autumn world of "mournful wind and sad dead leaves," we know it at once for a dwelling of hidden conflict and obscure unease. Connibeare, its master, is a man of great riches wrung from a Brazilian jungle. There at the moment of success his partner Hendrickson has died, and returning to civilization, Connibeare has been charged with foul play. Officially cleared, he has lived always under a cloud.

The situation is complicated by the fact that the dead man's widow was once Connibeare's mistress. She has refused to take any of his wealth as a gift, but now after many years has decided to sue him for a share in it as her right. She sends her daughter to Mulland to get some needed evidence, but the pretty Katherine's liking for Connibeare and love for his son Anthony preclude her acting as spy. The real mystery of Mulland, she feels almost at once, has nothing to do with the old tale of Connibeare and her father. The place seems to be haunted not by ghosts from the past but by a presence both living and malign. And this presence, though masked from the family, is soon revealed to the newcomer's fresh eye, under the cheery solicitudes of the homely little spinster Miss Mitchell. She dominates the household, keeps the machinery of a great estate in running order, and secretly and sedulously plots against the mental and spiritual integrity of all who inhabit the place, from Connibeare down. She is the malignant drop that precipitates evil in the chosen locale, a fact which the storyteller himself explicitly and inartistically notes. If instead of giving away the bad Miss Mitchell in round terms, her secret had been revealed by steadily cumulative bits of evidence, the story would have been more effective. The element of horror and surmise reaches its climax far too early; and having been informed (rather gratuitously) that the woman has "a mean, puny nature," not even her later traffic with black magic or her eventual madness are able to invest her drooping figure with tragedy.

In feeling, characterization, and dialogue the book is too good for a mere thriller, in mechanism it is hardly good enough; so that it may easily fall between the two stools whereon chief executives and lovers of sober fiction respectively perch.

H. W. B.

PORTRAIT OF A COURTEZAN. By Charles Caldwell Dobie. Appleton-Century. 1934. $2.50.

REACH FOR THE MOON. By Royce Brier. The same.

Mr. Dobie has a thorough knowledge of the history of San Francisco, but in writing his fictional account of the city during the 90's he is so conscious of the romance of San Francisco that in trying to catch its "feel" he mistakes surface facts for the actual atmosphere of the background. His story is often impeded by such statements as: "Bush Street was less steep than California Street and brought them as near home," or a page later: "It was an

(*Continued on next page*)

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MURDER IN A WALLED TOWN *Katherine Woods* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	Deaths of neurotic American widow and blustering fellow-countryman sojourning in lovely old French town solved by clever amateurs.	Background, characters, colors, suspense, love interest,— all okay, but the sleuthing is abecedarian.	Enjoyable
GIVE ME DEATH *Isabel Briggs Myers* (Stokes: $2.)	Suspicion of grisly family secret leads two proud Southrons to ostensible suicide — but Terningham is doubtful.	If this one didn't palpitate so much it would be better reading. Perpetually quivering emotions slow up good yarn.	Average
COME SEE THEM DIE *Harold Hadley* (Messner: $2.50.)	Crime reporter describes sundry gruesome events in his macabre and heterodox career.	Rough stuff, no frills, and considerable vulgarity, but acceptable for those who like the raw meat of murder.	Startling
RED SUN OF NIPPON *H. O. Yardley* (Longmans: $2.)	International intrigue, lovely Eurasian gal, handsome American Intelligence officer — and Greenleaf, ex-"Black Chamber" shark.	Washington diplomatic background and Secret Service methods, but plot is largely hoke and story creaks.	Below Par
THE VISITING VILLAIN *Carolyn Wells* (Lippincott: $2.)	Millionaire, with many wills and numerous legatees, apparently despatched by pet snake, but Fleming Stone thinks otherwise.	Matters testamentary, though necessary, tend to slacken interest in Mr. Stone's detailed and rather clever deductions.	Agreeable

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Double-Crostics: Number 30

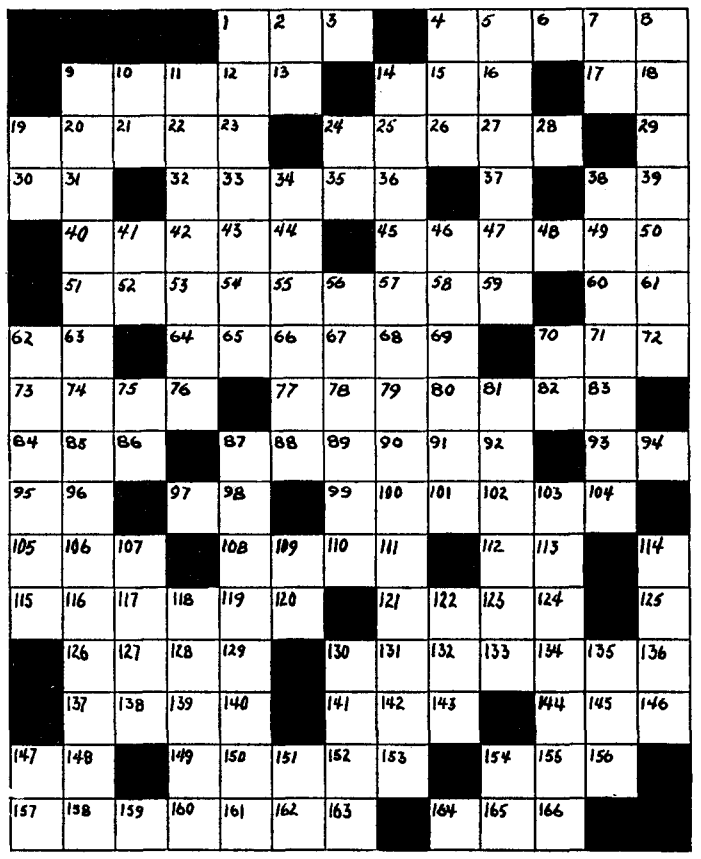
By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered (these numbers appear at the beginning of each definition) and you are thereby able to tell how many letters are in the required word. When you have guessed a word each letter is to be written in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

Either before (preferably) or after placing the letters in their squares you should write the words you have guessed on the blank lines which appear to the right in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter. The initial letters of this list of words spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

WORDS	DEFINITIONS
I. 18-101-69-106-61-37-73-23-151-54. A good scout (Am. lit.).	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
II. 3-76-115-80-15-142-107-29-154-85. Hardy country (two words).	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
III. 72-114-158-2-44-63. More readily; more properly.	_ _ _ _ _ _
IV. 133-99-144-82-47-119-36. Acute vexation.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
V. 50-62-140-128. Hindu God of departed spirits.	_ _ _ _
VI. 70-86-112-64-81-58-98. Early English saga.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
VII. 59-157-5-91-12. Fungus causing fermentation.	_ _ _ _ _
VIII. 7-13-53-89-40-49-103-24. Scene of carnage.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
IX. 17-96-118-123-100. Appease, mitigate.	_ _ _ _ _
X. 155-110-129-28-141. Living American woman novelist.	_ _ _ _ _
XI. 52-4-94-21-108-116-161. American author (1803-1882).	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
XII. 6-65-132-34-166-11. When big, a swindler; when little, a boy.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XIII. 83-131-164-32-92-19. Domain of the goddess Vesta.	_ _ _ _ _ _
XIV. 20-102-146-25-124. To give rise to; summon forth.	_ _ _ _ _
XV. 163-10-75-87-143-42. American poet (1842-1881).	_ _ _ _ _ _
XVI. 111-41-56-152-16-35-126. Catholic shrine in France.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _
XVII. 31-84-150-125-104-113-79-97-39-148. Novel by Edith Wharton.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XVIII. 8-134-138-48-127-109-149-88. Historic town in Virginia.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XIX. 60-78-46-145. A Melville character.	_ _ _ _
XX. 45-74-120-160-14-27-67-33. Author of "The Infernal Marriage."	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXI. 139-57-26-93-159. An old-world evergreen.	_ _ _ _ _
XXII. 135-95-117-9. A baseball team.	_ _ _ _
XXIII. 38-130-162-55-1. Toward the stern.	_ _ _ _ _
XXIV. 122-30-165-156-147-153-43-105-66-136-77. Italian unionist.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
XXV. 68-90-71-137-51-121-22. A baked concoction of eggs, etc.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _



SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC
(NUMBER 29)
HENRY NEWBOLT—"THE WANDERER"

Peace, peace awhile! Before his tireless feet
Hill beyond hill the road in sunlight goes;
He breathes the breath of morning, clear and sweet,
And his eyes love the high eternal snows.

The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

easy street for pedestrians walking from the downtown district toward Van Ness Avenue, for there was only one block of hill. After you climbed that it was comparatively level all the way, except for a slight dip before it came to Polk Street and another rise toward the avenue." This sort of writing is completely ineffectual in presenting the character of San Francisco; it is simply replacing the fascinating qualities which caused him to write the book by dull, topographical descriptions. Dobie's description of Bush Street comes from knowledge not from understanding; on the other hand Frank Norris's description of Polk Street in "McTeague" comes directly from his emotional self. Between these two approaches lies much of the difference between an excellent novel of San Francisco and one which has failed. The characters of Mr. Dobie's novel are not peculiar to the social structure of the city but are simply superimposed upon the background. His virtue of knowing San Francisco thoroughly has unfortunately proved his undoing, for though his factual accounts of the city are excellent, when he attempts to blend fact and fiction, he is so obsessed by the former that the latter becomes a weak shadow.

Royce Brier's novel about San Francisco at the turn of the century presents a very different attitude from that underlying "Portrait of a Courtezan." Like a character in his book the author realizes "you can't explain this town," and so, unlike Dobie, he does not endeavor to "explain" the city, to card-index and file away all the various qualities which constitute its romance, but tries instead to present the general atmosphere of San Francisco. Unfortunately this kaleidoscopic presentation does not succeed until the last hundred pages, for the first two-thirds of the book is weakened by the worst kind of romantic newspaper reporting style. It abounds in the elements which make a successful feature writer—"cataclysm words," dramatic metaphors, and bombastic adjectives, all wrapped up in tinsel phrasing. With the exception of a few good scenes in a typical newspaper office, Brier does not bring his picture of San Francisco to life until he describes the great earthquake and fire of 1906. His long apotheosis of the city in this chapter for the first time exhibits a true sentimental understanding without becoming maudlin, and it is these last hundred pages of the novel which redeem the weakness of the first two hundred. Although for no reason other than this section dealing with the earthquake, Brier's book deserves to be ranked among the few novels which have captured something of the city's obscure style—its way of living and its way of looking at life.

J. D. H.

STORMY ROAD. By Thomas Rowan. Washburn. 1934. $2.

Mr. Rowan tells what, by inference from the information supplied on his novel's jacket, is the story of his childhood among the mountain people of Alabama, but it remains far from a novel of any artistic significance. Raised in poverty, living out his boyhood in a home that rarely saw a moment's peace, the narrative takes his protagonist from the hills to a small town where his father works as night watchman in a foundry, to a coal town near Birmingham where the long drawn-out feud between his father and a stepson culminates in bloodshed and still another removal. As the story ends, the fifteen-year-old boy hops a freight.

There may be a novel in every human life, but not every human being can write that novel. Actuated by the utmost sincerity, Mr. Rowan has attempted to set his native people down on paper, to trace with a hand at times ironic and at others tender, the course of their squalid, argumentative, superstitious lives; he has succeeded only in part. Snatches of conversation have the ring of fictional authenticity; there is an occasional glimpse of the Alabama scene, but the majority of the novel is formless and rambling; the majority of the characters have the most meager resemblance to fully-rounded human beings, and the majority of the exposition is set down in such terms as this: "There! The danger had come! Into Pa's eyes damnation had made itself known." Erskine Caldwell has done more ironically amusing sketches of the southern poor-white; Emmett Gowen, less known but a sounder artist from every esthetic standpoint, has done the hill-billy in the round. Mr. Rowan could learn considerable from both.

A. C. B.

Latest Books Received

ECONOMICS

The Science of Economy. L. Kotany. Putnams. $3.50.

INTERNATIONAL

The Other Germany. G. Bolitho. Appleton.

MISCELLANEOUS

Nature's Way. V. C. Pedersen, M.D. Putnam. $1. *Cats Long-Haired and Short.* E. Buckworth-Herne-Soame. Dutton. $2.50. *Appreciations of Birds, Fish—Sea.* L. C. Persons. Miami, Fla.: Hefty Press. *The Rowland Johns Dog Book.* Dutton. $2.50. *American Secret Service Agent.* D. Wilkie as told to M. L. Luther. Stokes. $2.75.

PAMPHLETS

The Daughters of Richard Heron. R. Cavan. $2.50. *Oscar Wilde Twice Defended.* R. H. Sherard. Chicago: Argus. 75 cents. *The Case of David Lamson.* F. T. Russell and Yvor Winters. San Francisco: Lamson Defense Committee. *The Acanthus Motive in Decoration.* Metropolitan Museum of Art. 25 cents. *Achieving a Balanced Agriculture.* U. S. Government Printing Office. *Conception Period of Women.* K. Ogino, M.D. Harrisburg, Pa.: Medical Arts Pub. Co. *The Problem of International Propaganda.* I. Lee. *The Folk Idea in American Life.* R. Suckow. Scribners.

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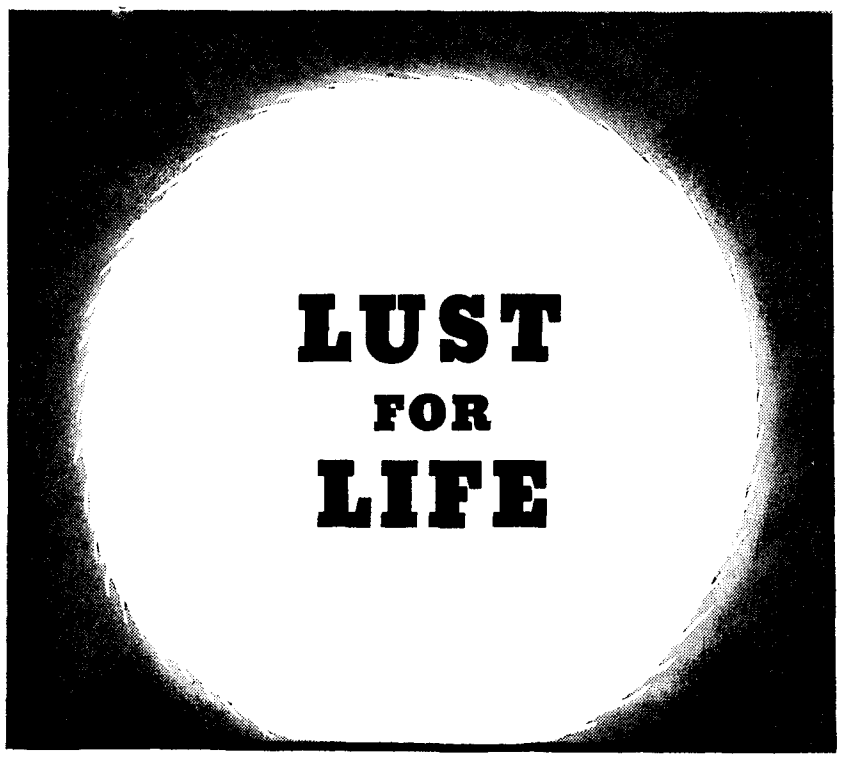

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SHADY BUSINESS IN THE RED CROSS

OF all the sensational scoops in the field of journalism, this exposé in the November issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY of a great public institution, supported almost wholly by contributions from millions of American men, women and children, will perhaps shock the American people the most.

The author, John L. Spivak, has unearthed a mass of information which casts a shadow upon "The Great Mother." He makes twenty serious charges against the Red Cross—charges buttressed by tremendous documentation from Red Cross and government reports and from admissions made by Judge John Barton Payne, its official head.

Mr. Spivak concludes that there is SHADY BUSINESS IN THE RED CROSS, and that the Congress of the United States, which chartered the organization, owes it to the American people who support it to make a thorough investigation of the Red Cross.

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PLAYS FOR SCHOOL PRODUCTION

C. P. of Chicago, Ill., wants "to find a play with truly American locale, no cast limit, for production in a private school." She feels that the pupils of today being far from romantic minded, would prefer to such fantasy as a Milne or a Barrie might offer, something bearing on their own land and its problems and traits.

A PLAY that has for many years proved immensely popular with Little Theatre Groups and amateur producers is "THE MAN FROM HOME," by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson. This may not be regarded as possessing a native background except in so far as "they change their climes and not their hearts who roam" since it plays in Europe where the American is thrown into contrast with the foreigners, but it nevertheless is racy of the United States. More recent plays that have repeated among unprofessional groups the success they have had with the professional are Maxwell Anderson's BOTH YOUR HOUSES, the 1933 Pulitzer Prize winning play, which is a delightful satirical comedy recounting the progress of a young and idealistic Congressman who attempts to prevent a raid on the Treasury, and ONCE IN A LIFETIME, by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart, a hilarious skit on Hollywood. Mr. Kaufman's earlier play written in conjunction with Marc Connelly, MERTON OF THE MOVIES, is another excellent choice for school production, as is a somewhat older satirico-comedy, IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE, by Roy Cooper Megrue and Walter Hackett. Mr. Megrue, who died just as he had achieved financial success as well as recognition, turned the shafts of a kindly if unsparing irony on a national characteristic which at the time he wrote was reaching its heyday. I still remember how heartily his audiences laughed with him, and how pleased I was that the young man I had known as my brother's classmate and who constantly reminded me of Tommy Traddles because his sleeves were always too short for his arms, should suddenly have become a popular playwright. C. P. may also want suggestions of another sort, such plays as John Drinkwater's ABRAHAM LINCOLN, or farces like Wilbur Braun's THE JINX, which is specially popular with young people and excellent for school production, or Christopher Morley's highly entertaining THURSDAY EVENING (to which Longmans, Green hold the rights), an account of what happens when the cook goes out, or Alice Duer Miller's COME OUT OF THE KITCHEN, which has a Virginia setting. With the exception of Mr. Morley's little play all the dramas I have mentioned can be procured in inexpensive editions from Samuel French, whose carefully annotated and excellently arranged trade list I recommend to C. P. This catalogue has the added advantage of citing the royalty that is required for the use of any play it lists.

FOOD ANALYSIS

Mrs. J. B. C. of New York City would like a book, or books, on the research of foods, giving the food analysis of various products.

She will find what she wants in any one of the following three, B. S. Bronson's NUTRITION AND FOOD CHEMISTRY (Wiley), H. C. Sherman's THE CHEMISTRY OF FOOD AND NUTRITION (Macmillan), and FOOD ANALYSIS (McGraw-Hill), by A. G. Wodman. The Department of Agriculture of the United States Government issues monographs on foods of all sorts which are of course of the first authority. A useful book in which Mrs. J. B. C. will find general discussion of food adulterants and preservatives, if that is what she is interested in, is HENLEY'S TWENTIETH CENTURY BOOK OF TEN THOUSAND RECIPES, FORMULAS, AND PROCESSES (Henley), an encyclopedia which packs into one volume a vast amount of information of the highest usefulness to the housewife. From food examination to waterproofing and cosmetics, everything is here.

PLUTARCH'S LIVES

H. M. of New York City, who recently saw a handsome and expensive set of Plutarch's LIVES *on display in a bookshop and who feels that this particular edition is beyond the capacity of his purse, wants to know if there is any edition which will fall in price between it and the unpretentious Modern Library one which is such good value at a dollar. He would like also to get Montaigne's* ESSAYS *in attractive format at not too great cost.*

Within the last two weeks the first of what is to be a three volume edition of the latter has come from Knopf. Like all Mr. Knopf's books it is well bound, well printed, and well designed, a really handsome volume, costing only $3.75. Translated and edited by that excellent scholar, Jacob Zeitlin, it follows the text of the Bordeaux Copy. It is composed of two parts, the first a biographical introduction, and the second the essays themselves, and has extensive and elaborate notes. As to Plutarch's LIVES, H. M. can procure the most widely used version, the Dryden-Clough translation, in five volumes at $8.50. This is issued by Little, Brown. Scribners publishes the Langhorne translation in two volumes for ten dollars. Either should satisfy H. M.'s desire.

RUSSIA'S PLAN

Mrs. C. M. J. of Raleigh, N. C., is about to prepare a discourse on "Russia's Plan," and wants to know where to turn for authentic material in regard to it.

If she has access to a library that contains it, or wishes to order the book from the World Peace Foundation, Boston, Mass., she can get absolutely reliable information from William H. Chamberlin's THE SOVIET PLANNED ECONOMIC ORDER. This presents the background and development of the First Five-Year Plan, and is as concrete a discussion as she can possibly need. Mr. Chamberlin, who for many years has been Russian correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor*, is recognized as one of the most astute and accurate commentators on Soviet affairs. His book, published a few years ago by Little, Brown, and since issued in revised edition, SOVIET RUSSIA, is one of the best in the field. His new book, RUSSIA'S IRON AGE (Little, Brown), has just appeared. To it Mrs. C. M. J. might add Maurice Hindus's latest volume, THE GREAT OFFENSIVE (Smith & Haas), and so equipped ought to be able to go forth to meet her club serene in the consciousness of a paper full of interest.

HAWAII AGAIN

John W. Beamer, of Wabash, Indiana, has taken the trouble to send me a letter in regard to my reply (in the September 15 *Saturday Review*) to the inquiry of H. G. W., about Hawaiian architecture and books with a Hawaiian background.

> Perhaps [he says] it was difficult to answer the first question and perhaps it was almost impossible to secure this information because the Hawaiians—I mean the genuine Hawaiians—are not concerned with the houses in which their bodies sleep and live as much as with the houses in which their souls, if I may make this distinction, live. You referred to Don Blanding's "Hula Moons." H. G. W. should read Don Blanding's "Leaves from a Grass House" and "Paradise Loot." In the first collection of poems he starts off with
>
> *My grass house stands by an open sea*
> *On a bit of beach that belongs to me,*
> *And I paid—I don't remember the price*
> *Of my little acre in Paradise.*
>
> And, so, does it matter how much a Hawaiian house costs or how it is built? After all, how many grass huts exist today in the Paradise of the Pacific? I have covered practically all of three of the islands and saw only a few grass huts and some of these had tin roofs! Modern civilization has changed Hawaii and the chances are that the summer cottage plans offered by the average mail order house would answer the question asked in this instance.
>
> In addition to the books which you mention I want to urge the reading of "Under Hawaiian Skies," by Albert Pierce Taylor. Mr. Taylor is Librarian, Archives of Hawaii, and the book is published by the Advertiser Publishing Co., Ltd., Honolulu. And in mentioning novels, I remember Jack London's "The House of Pride and Other Tales of Hawaii." In Hilo I have a cousin who has, among other interests, a hardware business. Jack London stopped in his store to buy supplies, and the two men would visit for hours. My relative should write about his experiences and his thirty-five or forty years of life in Hawaii. He, like Jack London, has seen many of the South Sea Islands and, for that matter, most of the rest of the world.
>
> ALOHA OE.

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PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

BON VOYAGE, J. D. Monsieur de Mystery. "B."

SILVERMINE TAVERN AND GALLERIES, NORWALK, CONN. Small, distinguished, different. Overlooking Silvermine River. Booklet on request. Tel. Norwalk 2300.

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FROM MAINE to California, critics are calling him "a more than worthy successor to Thorne Smith" and his novel "splendid entertainment for Thorne Smith fans." Who? Charles Gilson. What novel? "The Cat and The Curate" of which it is said, "Only a genius could write such an uproarious melange of wit, irony and priceless satire." Ask your bookseller for a copy; open and read any two pages; we wager you'll buy a copy forthwith. ($2.00) Or write us. Frederick A. Stokes Company, 443 Fourth Ave., N. Y.

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PROFESSIONAL MAN, motoring to Florida about October 25th, would like a congenial companion to enjoy trip. Box 37-A.

The Compleat Collector

RARE BOOKS

CONDUCTED BY JOHN T. WINTERICH

In alternate weeks this Department is devoted to Fine Printing and is conducted by Carl Purington Rollins.

True Story

A NEW YORK bookseller early this month received a cable from his Paris representative the tenor of which was this: "Assemble any manuscripts French authors nineteenth century Zola France Flaubert etc and rush stop have contacted collector greatly interested stop he is Louis Barthou foreign minister."

What You Will

A casual inspection of the average book-auction catalogue (and, too often, of the average bookshop catalogue) must justify the uninitiated in the view that the book-collector's hobby-horse has never known any more exciting pasturage than the platform of a merry-go-round. Too much collecting activity merely proceeds in a not particularly vicious circle from à Becket to Zola (or occasionally to Zubly).

But not all collecting is sheer uninspired copy-cattery. A larger independence of spirit and subject has been manifested during recent years. Consider the instance of an authority on plant pathology at Pennsylvania State College, described but not identified in a recent issue of the *Publishers' Weekly* by Frederick M. Hopkins, who is assembling a library on potatoes. I hold no brief for the potato; when Mr. Hopkins denominates the subject prosaic my only quarrel with him is that prosaic is too fine a word to waste on a potato. But the assembling of a library on the potato (and I know Mr. Hopkins agrees) holds far more potentiality for romantic adventure than does the treadmill pursuit of—well, there is no profit in specifying a sequence that any student of the collecting panorama can recite for himself.

The spectacle of a pilgrim on the threshold of bibliophily inquiring what there is left for him to collect pathetically parallels the plight of the college freshman with an English theme due in forty minutes beating the underbrush of perceptivity for something to write about. To both of these is recommended inspection of a catalogue —No. 150—recently issued by Grafton & C.. of 51 Great Russell Street, London. It is a small catalogue with a big title: "De Historia Rerum: Books on the History of Common and Uncommon Things." It lists fewer than five hundred items, but these are divided among 164 subjects, and the subjects are indexed on the second cover. Some of the subjects (as aeronautics, crime, fishing, railways, tobacco) are already the particular passions of large groups of collectors, which does not by any means signify that there is no room for newcomers. Others (as cornmilling, Flemish literature, and the Order of St. John of Jerusalem) seem too restricted even in a schedule of specialties for listing here. Most of the rest are herewith presented as a modest indication of the inclusiveness of the collecting field:

Advertising, alchemy, amazons, amber, asylums, automobiles, banking, bazaars, bookkeeping, bookmarkers, boots and shoes, brewing, caricature, cattle, cavalry, ceramics, cinema, clocks, coaching, coins, color printing, cotton, cremation, cricket, cycling, earthquakes, elections, epidemics, fables, factory laws, fairs, falconry, fires, flags, funerals, furniture, gambling, games, glass, guillotine, hairdressing, horses, hospitals, hydrophobia, insurance, iron, lace, liberty of the press, literary controversies, lithography, local government, lotteries, machinery, mathematics, measures, microscopes, museums, music printing, musical instruments, names, needlework, nursery rhymes, opium, oysters, pantomimes, pawnbroking, periodicals, photography, pirates, playing-cards, popular delusions, postage stamps, prisons, psychical research, public finance, publishing, riots, roads, rowing, shipping, signboards, slavery, smallpox, spoons, steam engines, stereotyping, sundials, swans, tailoring, tapestries, taxation, tea, telegraph, telephone, tin, volcanoes, weather, windmills, wine, witchcraft, women, wool, wrestling.

From a few doors up Great Russell Street on the opposite side (No. 66), the shop of James Tregaskis & Son, emerges Caxton Head Bulletin 11: "Some Recently Acquired Pamphlets & Books on the Application of Science in the XIX Century." The Tregaskis shop is an ancient and honorable establishment (A. Edward Newton wrote a fine introduction to their One-Thousandth Catalogue three years ago); you may acquire there, as readily as elsewhere, a First Folio or a "Lamia" in boards. But you will find nothing of this sort in Bulletin 11. If, however, your tastes lie in the direction of anastatic printing, air pumps, calculating machines, canals, coal mining, electric lighting, explosives, gas-lighting, hydraulic power, optics, paper-making, rope-making, steam navigation, timber, watch-making, or water supply, Bulletin 11 will be to your taste.

Let it not be assumed that only within the benevolent shadow of the British Museum do booksellers display an energy in cataloguing that takes them outside the à Becket-Zola palings. The two Great Russell Streeters just cited simply happen to have provided the most recent instances of catholicity in indexing. The old-and-rare trade the world over, and nowhere more effectively than in America, is prepared to give first aid to the neophyte. They ask only that he let them know what he is interested in, be it à Becket or abattoirs. They do not even insist that he be interested in the subject he seeks books about, but it will be much pleasanter for him if he is.

Things Look Up

Miss Millay's new book of verse, "Wine from These Grapes," will be launched November 8th, and three bottles of champagne will be smashed against the coasting hull. Or, to shift the similitude from marine to terrene transportation, "Wine from These Grapes" will depart on November 8th in three sections. The first will be the De Luxe Limited Edition, two volumes, boxed, autographed, 31 sets only, at $50 a set. The second will be the Limited Autographed Edition, two volumes, boxed, 289 sets only, at $12.50 a set. The third will be the First Regular Trade Edition, single volume, consisting of eighteen thousand copies. Lest the suspicion arise that this section is composed entirely of day coaches, let it be explained that the First Regular Trade Edition is itself separable into grandstand and bleacher divisions, a diamond horseshoe and a nigger-heaven, a right and a left wing. You may have it in leather at three dollars or/and in cloth at two.

Miss Millay became the victim, or the beneficiary, or at any rate the occasion of freak limiteds at the outset of her published career. The Japan vellum edition of "Renascence" (1917), consisting of seventeen copies, is, inevitably, the crown jewel in any collection of twentieth-century American poetry fortunate enough to house it. By comparison with this meagre allotment her present publishers have been prodigal. A summary of the two forms of limiteds in which most of her books have appeared since that practice was resumed is of interest, especially if one ponders the dates of appearance: "The King's Henchman" (1927), 35 and 158; "The Buck in the Snow" (1928), 36 and 479; "Fatal Interview" (1931), 36 and 481; "Wine from These Grapes" (1934), 31 and 289.

That anyone can view these statistics and deny that better times are close upon us passes belief. Whether the cause of bibliophily is stimulated by this diversity of format and price, this heady Einsteinization of the simple modifier *first*, admits of more doubt.

Notes

Part II of the library of the late Rev. Dr. Roderick Terry of Newport, R. I., will go on exhibition at the American Art Association on October 31st. . . . Arthur Pforzheimer has bought the business and stock of the late Alwin J. Scheuer and will continue to deal in rare books, first editions, manuscripts, and drawings at the same address—26 East 56th Street, New York.

PERSONALS

COPYWRITER, book publishing, wanted by advertising agency. Box 36-A.

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adored by balletomaniacs

"*Nijinsky danced, and a seventeen-year-old Hungarian girl watched, spellbound, breathless. The Harlequin floated about on the stage, effortless as a feather, seeming to rise suddenly in the air and drift downward more slowly than he had risen, defying gravitation. The girl sitting in the dark thought: That is art. That is the man.*"

"*The hypnotized audience, crowded tier above tier of the dark theatre, held itself strained and intent in its anxiety not to miss one gyration, one least movement, of the great dancer—that dancer who had enslaved not only New York and St. Petersburg but Paris itself . . She revealed to them new and more dazzling visions of beauty in the union of colour and motion. She hid herself in a labyrinth of curves . a mist of iridescent light . . . Gradually her form emerged from the riddle, triumphant, provocative, and for an instant she rested like an incredible living jewel in the deep gloom of the stage .*"

These paragraphs from LEWIS GANNETT's tribute to *Nijinsky* and from *The Journal of Arnold Bennett* suggest *The Inner Sanctum's* state of mind as these lines are written, to celebrate the publication of ARNOLD HASKELL's new book, *Balletomania, The Story of an Obsession.*

Lives there a man with soul so dead who doesn't know what it means to be a *balletomaniac*?

Let him hearken then to the story of a group of *balletomaniacs* who decided to pay tribute to a certain great dancer. They raised a fund, and at a lordly price bought a pair of ballet slippers belonging to their favorite. They put the slippers in a pot. They prepared a fine sauce. They cooked the shoes. They ate them.

Unless you can follow this procedure under the inspired gastronomic guidance of some one like M. HENRI CHARPENTIER, and serve the ballet slippers *à la Henri, The Inner Sanctum* doesn't guarantee this sort of diet, but it serves to define the term *balletomania,* and to suggest the sort of obsession which suffuses every page of ARNOLD HASKELL's book. In literature obsession is nine points of law.

Like *Nijinsky, Balletomania* is a book peopled with the supreme masters of the most glamorous of all arts, from TREFILOVA, PAVLOVA, KCHESSINSKA and KARSAVINA to the fifteen-year-old stars of today, TOUMANOVA and BARONOVA. Here are captured the movements of their dances, the splendors, the triumphs, the disasters of their lives. Here—in an entirely new light—is retold the story of NIJINSKY and DIAGHILEFF. Here also are CHALIAPINE, FOKINE, MASSINE, IDA RUBINSTEIN, ISADORA DUNCAN, LYDIA LOPOKOVA, MARTHA GRAHAM and a host of other enchanting artists.

THAMAR KARSAVINA once said of ARNOLD HASKELL that so complete was his mastery of this art, so irresistible his enthusiasm, that he could organize a ballet in the Bank of England. She might have added that he could even keep book-sellers, book-reviewers, and book-publishers on their toes, including those newly-converted and unrepentant balletomaniacs

ESSANDESS

192 Booksellers

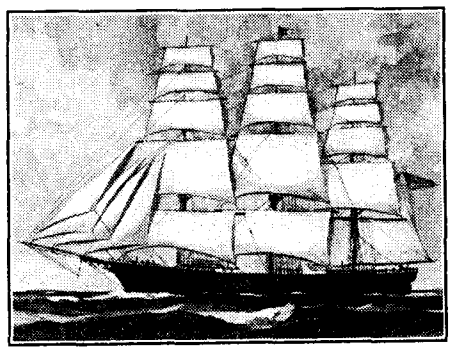
throughout the country are now selling the REVIEW. Write for information to the Bookstore Department of the SRL at 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

☞The book departments of three famous stores—Halle Brothers, Cleveland; Joseph Horne, Pittsburgh; Hudson's, Detroit—are collaborating in a festival of authors the week of October 22-27. Among the eminent writers who will make this triangle tour and speak at these enterprising book-outlets we observe Joseph C. Lincoln, Valentine Williams, Alexander Woollcott, Sigmund Spaeth, Thomas Craven, May Massee, Kenneth Roberts, Kurt Wiese, Thornton Burgess, Louis Untermeyer, Carl Van Doren, Marie Peary, and our own Mr. Canby. It sounds like a rousing frolic. ☞Speaking of the dry-goods stores we note that Bergdorf Goodman has picked up Buckminster Fuller's name for his streamline car (and indeed a whole new philosophy of living) and calls a new model of walking pump the *Dymaxion.* It has "dynamic inlays of calf." ☞Old Quercus watches the whole panorama of civilization and reserves the right of commenting on anything. ☞As for instance the grievous news that a lady has given a prize to Connecticut College to be awarded to the student who writes "the most commercially potential" fiction. ☞That's just what's wrong with so much fiction. ☞A young man in California, William Saroyan, has just made a ten-strike (*The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze,* Random House) by writing things which would have seemed utterly impotential commercially. ☞ We hope he will not be too wildly ballyhooed, because he has real and beautiful stuff in him.

☞Mr. David Hazen of the Portland *Oregonian* was here and pleased us much by telling us that this modest *Review* is faithfully read in the office of that paper. ☞The Coast is very alert these days: the two pleasantest booksellers' catalogues recently are those of Jake Zeitlin, 705½ West Sixth St., Los Angeles, and of Dawson's, 627 S. Grand Ave., Ibid. Dawson's catalogue, put together in the form of a sampler, was compiled by Mr. Dawson's graceful mermaids in their blue smocks; it is rich in interesting notes and gay quotations. ☞Jake Zeitlin's catalogue is wittily laid out as a rich menu with various kinds of books classified as aperitif, hors d'œuvres, soups, salads, entrées, pastries, spices, demi-tasses, etc. Hugh Walpole contributes a delightful preface, confessing that he enjoys finding Gertrude Stein catalogued under "Noodles." ☞This remarkable catalogue of Mr. Zeitlin's was designed by that excellent printer Tom Stricker. ☞Anyone interested in the excitements of typography had better stop in at the N. Y. Public Library, between now and November 12, to see the exhibition of famous books printed during four centuries (1534-1934) by the Cambridge University Press (England). ☞Doubleday Doran have arranged a most attractive window-display for Gordon Grant's *Ship Ahoy,* an ingenious book of cut-out ship models. The display (our cut here-



with can't do it justice) shows the clipper *Flying Cloud,* with cardboard sails cut out and glued on thus giving a third dimension of reality. ☞The pleasantest argument Old Quercus has had lately was with that fine painter Grant Wood (east from Iowa for the first time in seven years) as to whether the shadow under a black hen is blacker than the shadow under a white hen. This apropos of Mr. Wood's superb new painting *Dinner for Threshers* which shows an Iowa farmhouse dinner at threshing time. ☞Among our unknown heroes on 45th Street is the man who arranges the windows at Lewis & Conger's, corner of Sixth Avenue. Recently he had a display in honor of sleep, bedding, and recumbency in general; including copies of such books as *How to Relax, Fun in Bed,* etc. We were thrilled by his placard: *This artfully designed Couch Bed is Sinfully Luxurious.* ☞Philosophical gloss: luxury, however, is not sinful per se. ☞It is often the most sophisticated merchants who betray the innate naiveté of the American Folk; for instance a modiste called Jay-Thorpe who urges (in the *New Yorker*) "black taffeta to bring out the dream princess in you." ☞Suddenly we thought of the agreeable modesty of Boston publishers: *Little* Brown, *Small* Maynard, and Lower Case Page. ☞We were sorry Mr. Harry Hansen remarked (in the *World-Telegram* lately) of Rudyard Kipling "There are no ideas in him, only rules of conduct; there are no visions, only vistas." Certainly it is possible to disrelish some phases of Kipling's genius; but, as he has remarked "the just Gods sell everything at its price," and we have his extraordinary gift at the price of some imperialist notions that don't sit very well. But good Lord, can we say there are no "ideas" in the man who wrote *The Ship That Found Herself, With the Night Mail,* or *Wireless* (that extraordinary story about Keats)? Or *The Jungle Book* —the greatest social fable of our lifetime? Or *The Craftsman,* that poem about Shakespeare which is a whole history of literature in itself? The man who has done more, perhaps, than any historian to give us a living notion of ancient Rome—and collaborated in writing a fifth book of Horace's Odes? ☞Mr. Hansen says of R. K. that he "has been dying for fifty years." Would God there were more of us just so moribund. Has Mr. Hansen seen that extraordinary collection of Kipling's speeches (*A Book of Words,* 1928) which certainly shows a mind ranging in full power over the problems of our world. ☞"Brother, thy tail hangs down behind." ☞We get much pleasure from the superbly designed bulletins of the Lakeside Press (R. R. Donnelley & Sons, Chicago) — especially their gorgeous color work which always renews our faith in living. ☞Among the innumerable Scallopini of seduction that reach us from all sorts of private presses and phalanges of typography we commend the Peter Pauper series of inexpensive de luxes, only 2 bucks apiece. The first two are charming reprints of *The Constitution of the United States* (of which we are pleased to be reminded) and Housman's *Shropshire Lad.* The format of the latter, says the Peter Pauper Press (New Rochelle, N. Y.) "has evoked the most astonishing praise from sentimental collectors and hard-boiled booksellers alike." ☞But probably we like Peter Pauper best of all because he relishes (and understands) the Love Poems of John Donne. ☞Doing some of our Christmas foreboding early, we are delighted to hear of a volume published by Peter Davies in London, *The Fairies Return,* 8/6. The title is a bit frou-frou for our taste, but the idea of the book is agreeable: famous tales from Grimm, Hans Andersen, Arabian Nights, etc., retold for adults (in modern setting) by a group of talented hands. Clemence Dane, Arnot Robertson, Œnone Somerville, Eric Linklater, A. G. Macdonell and others are among these moody humorists. It would make an agreeable Christmas present. ☞Of Mr. Canby's new book *The Age of Confidence* Ellen Glasgow says "I should like to see it included in the list of required reading for every student of American life." ☞Of Don Marquis's *Chapters for the Orthodox,* to be published October 24, Don Gordon of the American News Co. predicts "probably will be considered the most pointed delicate satire ever produced in this country. Of course there will be screams from the sanctimonious."

☞Attractive little Hawthorn House, a printshop in Windham, Conn., sends out a tiny leaflet of explanation about itself, and pleases Old Quercus by using as motto a quotation from Cato. ☞Our contemporary weekly *The Commonweal,* so sagaciously conducted by Michael Williams, will celebrate its tenth anniversary on November 2. Hearty congratulations from this desk. ☞*The Commonweal* enchanted us lately with a bonny little editorial *In Praise of Onions.* Does Mr. Williams remember our own Mr. Canby's fine piece about *Skunk Cabbage?* ☞But there's an advt. that appears occasionally in *The Commonweal* that always perplexes us. It's a kind of questionnaire uttered by the New Catholic Dictionary; one challenge is "Name 5 of the 25 attributes of God." ☞Is it safe to limit the attributes of the Infinite to any definite quota?

"Takes an indisputable place among the upper ranks of America's lyric poets", says Ruth Lechlitner, in BOOKS, of

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